



**TOPICS FOR
THE TIMES**

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Topics for the Times

By

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A DISCUSSION OF CURRENT QUESTIONS
IN CHRISTIAN THOUGHT
AND LIFE

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PREFACE.

Except in one or two instances the addresses which make up this small volume, are practically given as the stenographer took them down during their delivery in the Gospel Tabernacle, New York. At the earnest and repeated request of those who heard these messages, they are reproduced in book form. I recognize that each of the questions treated would make a book in itself. It therefore goes without the saying, they are suggestive rather than exhaustive.

F. E. MARSH.

December, 1904.

INTRODUCTION.

BY REV. A. B. SIMPSON.

We can think of no better preface for this timely volume than its own table of contents. These are the very subjects that people are asking about and they are not merely theories and speculations, but have a most practical and far-reaching bearing upon the destinies of human souls. Dr. Marsh has treated these current questions in Christian thought and life not only with masterful logic and accurate scholarship, but with the most heart-searching and practical application of the truth to the conscience and life of the reader.

They were given in the first place as a series of popular addresses in New York City to audiences that increased from night to night until, at the close, the large building was crowded to excess. They caught the popular ear, and at the same time, profoundly impressed the conscience and heart of the audience and led in many cases to definite decision for Christ.

We are quite sure that the publication of these timely discussions will have a powerful influence in checking much prevalent skep-

ticism, in arming Christian workers against much foolish agnosticism, in interesting a very wide circle of readers who will be attracted by the very pungency of the titles and in leading many thoughtless lives to earnest reflection and permanent decision for God.

IS THE BIBLE THE WORD OF GOD?

“The law of the Lord is perfect” (Ps. xix. 7).

ONE of the first things which settlers in a new country would have to do, would be to clear the ground upon which they find themselves, and it is often essential in dealing with any of the questions which arise through the study of God’s Word that we should clear the ground in order that our position may be perfectly clear. Is the Bible the Word of God? We want to perfectly understand what we mean by asking that question. When I ask that question I do not mean are our translations of the Bible the Word of God. Translators have often made mistakes. But when I ask the question, Is the Bible the Word of God? I want you to think of the Word as it was first given by God. While we have not got the original manuscripts we have got that which plainly indicates what the original manuscripts were, and therefore my answer to the question to begin with is in the affirmative. We believe the Bible is the Word of God. I do not state that all translations of the Bible are correct. Transla-

tors have often made mistakes. Some of you may have heard of the "vinegar Bible." It is called the "vinegar Bible" because the translators in translating the parable of the vineyard made a mistake in naming it "the parable of the vinegar." I daresay you have heard of the "wicked Bible." The "wicked Bible" is so called because the seventh commandment, instead of reading, "Thou shalt not commit adultery," read "Thou shalt commit adultery." A translator in translating the passage, "We shall all be changed," unfortunately left out the first letter of the word, and it read, "We shall all be hanged." I only give these by way of illustration. When we make the claim that the Bible is the Word of God, we are often met by men who tell us that there are inaccuracies in the Word, that we are not to take the Word in its entirety, because there are so many contradictions found in it, and it is astonishing how they hunt around to find the contradictions. I remember on one occasion trying to find out all the contradictions, and one by one I studied them, one by one took them out and in every so-called contradiction I found a confirmation of the truth of the Word of God. We are often told, for instance, that David on one occasion paid

fifty shekels of silver for a threshing floor, as mentioned in II. Samuel xxiv. 24, but when we turn to I. Chronicles xxi. 25, we find he paid six hundred shekels of gold, and people immediately jump to the conclusion that the transactions are one and the same, whereas if they were to study carefully they would see that there are not one but two transactions. In the one transaction David is buying a threshing floor, and in the other transaction he is buying a whole site, upon which the temple was afterwards erected. There are two different Hebrew words used to describe the two transactions, one simply meaning place, a threshing floor, as in Ruth iii. 2, and the other meaning a locality, a region, as in Judges xviii, 10. If I go to a man's farm and buy a barn or a threshing floor, and pay \$500 for it, you can quite understand that that is one transaction. But if in the after days I go and buy the farm and pay \$5,000 for it, you would not for one moment think that when I was paying for the farm I was paying for the threshing floor. You would not confuse the two transactions, you would recognize they were two distinct acts of business. And so instead of being any contradiction in this,

we find there is a confirmation of the truth of the Word of God.

Dean Stanley on one occasion found that Stephen, in his address before the Sanhedrim had made seventy different mistakes! But my friend, Dr. E. W. Bullinger, in studying Dean Stanley's statements, found he had made seventy blunders. We want to carefully ponder the Word of God and to compare Scripture with Scripture, and as we do so, we shall find many a seeming contradiction will turn out to be a confirmation of the truth.

I want to give you some proofs that the Word of God is perfect, that it is inherent, that it is reliable, that it is without fault and without flaw, as the Psalmist says, "The law of the Lord is perfect."

I. *The Bible is the Word of God because it claims to be.* I don't believe merely that the Bible is the Word of God because it inspires me, but I believe the Bible is the Word of God because it claims to be. Why do we believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God? We believe that He is the Son of God because He claims to be, and proves His claim in Himself, by His acts, and by His words, and by His miracles. If you ask me, outside of my own internal experience, why I

believe in Christ, I at once respond, "I believe that Jesus is what He claims to be because of what He is in Himself. As I think of Him in His personality I see He is out and above everybody else." John Stuart Mill in speaking of Jesus Christ said that He could not be accounted for from a mere human standpoint, that He could not be the conception merely of those ignorant fishermen of Galilee. Then according to the statement of John Stuart Mill, who did not own to the claims of Christ in their totality, we are shut up to this fact, that since the Lord Jesus Christ was not evolved from the thought of those ignorant fishermen, and could not be accounted for, from a human standpoint, then He must have been divine, and He must have been all that He claimed to be, namely the Son of God. On the same ground, when we think of the Word of God, we believe it is the Word of God because it claims to be. In II. Timothy iii. 16, we read these words, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God." The revised version says, "Every Scripture inspired of God." The main point is what is Scripture? and in the previous verse Paul says in speaking to Timothy, "From a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, or

the sacred writings, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus."

The main point is what is Scripture? Scripture is sacred writing, and of these sacred writings we read that they are God breathed. As to the reference here it undoubtedly refers to the Old Testament, and as to what constitutes Old Testament Scriptures, you have only to remember what Christ Himself has said, when in expounding the things concerning Himself, He began at Moses, and the prophets and the psalms. So you get the whole of the Old Testament as to what Scripture means, as to what is understood by the sacred writings. Jesus Christ Himself has put His stamp upon the whole of the Old Testament as we have it.

Notice this word "inspired," or "God breathed." It is a wonderful word, it is one of those words which come under the heading of what Greek scholars call "hapaxlegomana." That is, a word which only occurs once, or when hapaxlegomana is spoken of, it refers to things that are done once. As God breathed into man at first, and man became a living soul, so God has breathed into this book, or rather He

has breathed this book, thus it is the very breath of God.—“God breathed.”

What do we read? “The Word of God is quick,” or living and energetic, “and sharper than any two-edged sword.” Oh, remember what is said of the Word. It is living and energetic. It seems to me that the phonograph is a beautiful illustration as to what the Scriptures are. When you speak into the phonograph there is a delicate arrangement by means of which each breath causes an indentation upon the wax cylinder, and when that wax cylinder is adjusted it reproduces the words you have spoken into it. And so it seems to me that the holy men of old were, so to speak, the wax cylinder upon which God breathed as He spoke, and they received the divine impression, and then they gave forth what God had given them. Mark you, they did not understand what they were writing about, for we read in the first chapter of the epistle of Peter that they were “Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow.” This interpretation is called mechanical inspiration. Call it what you like, the fact re-

mains that the great Writer used the men, through whom He wrote, as the medium to convey His words, hence we read again and again of God's speaking through the prophets, or by means of the prophets, or writing by the prophets.

We take this ground that we believe the Bible is the Word of God because it claims to be, and beseech you not to run counter to God's Word, because, if you do, you will find yourself, like the sea gulls, which, when the Statue of Liberty was erected used to come and soar around the light, and dash themselves up against it, and were dashed on the rocks beneath.

If you go up against the buttresses of God, you will find you are doing yourself damage in questioning the authority of the Word of the living God.

II. *The Bible is the Word of God because it finds us.*

"The Word of God is quick and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Heb. iv. 12).

In passing, I want you to notice the word "discerner." It only occurs once in the New

Testament just as "inspiration" only occurs once. It is a very suggestive word, the Greek word means critic. The Word of God is the critic of the thoughts and intents of the heart. We find men to-day criticizing the Word of God. The proper way is to be criticized by the Word of God. We find men sitting in judgment on the Word of God. The Scriptural method is to have the Word of God sit in judgment upon us. If men would only let the Word of God act in them, it would humble them in the very dust. Instead of this they seek, in their proud self-sufficiency, to put their word against the utterance of the living God. Coleridge once said "he believed the Scriptures were the Word of God, because they found him." They do find us. A missionary on one occasion after he had been preaching to some Chinamen on the first chapter of the epistle to the Romans, was accosted by one of the Chinamen, who said to him, "Who has been telling you about me and my life? You have got it all written down in that book of yours." It is perfectly true. The book finds us, finds what we are and tells us we are sinners, we are lost. How different is man's conception of things from God's! There is a well-known leader in

Christendom to-day, who said in speaking to his followers on the definition of sin, "Sin is sin when you are conscious of it. For instance, if you do something you know to be wrong, it is wrong. If you fail to do what you know to be right, it is not right. He made our knowledge to be the standard of sin." How different from the Word of God! The Word of God says, "Though man wist it not, yet is he guilty." Man's consciousness is not the standard as to what sin is, it is what the Word says. "Sin is a transgression of the law." Sin is lawlessness. Sin is self-will, man putting his will in opposition to God. Every act of man in his natural state is sin in the sight of God. The very meaning of the word "sin" is to miss the mark. Man's conception as to what sin is, is wrong-doing. God's conception as to what sin is, is failing to do that which is right. This is a very different thing. Man thinks as long as he knows he is not doing wrong, he is not sinning. God says, "If you don't love Me with all your heart and your neighbor as yourself and trust in My Son, you are sinning against Me." Let me ask every unsaved man and woman in this audience to-night to let the searchlight of God's Word penetrate into

your heart and learn what sin is and you will be humble in His Presence and you will soon be crying out, "God be merciful to me, a sinner."

The Word of God finds us, it shows us what we are. As a man once quaintly put it, "It turns us inside out and upside down," and makes us conscious of the fact that in ourselves we are utterly undone. In the fifth chapter of Isaiah, the prophet pronounced woe after woe against the sinners who were sinning in Israel, but in the sixth chapter of his prophecy, what do we find him saying? "Woe is *me* for I am undone, I am a man of unclean lips." He was made conscious of what he was in himself. He condemned others quick enough, but when he came face to face with the holiness of God, then he began to find out that he was wrong and had done wrong. You will never do right until you are right. You want to know what sin is in order to appreciate the Saviour. It is when you see how terribly you have sinned against God in what you have not done, not merely in the wrong you have committed, but in not responding to the Word, and will of Christ and God, you begin to find out that you are utterly undone and condemned in the presence of God.

III. *The Bible is the Word of God, because of the Christ it reveals.*

Christ said to the Jews when He was speaking to them on one occasion, "Ye will not come unto Me that ye might have life." He was not then giving a command to search the Scriptures. He was reproving the Jews for searching the Scriptures and being occupied with the letter of the Word, and missing the grand purpose of God's revelation which was to reveal Himself. The written Word is given to us to reveal the living Word, and unless we see the living Word in the written Word, we shall utterly fail. I think it was the late Dr. Gordon of Boston, who on one occasion, bought a puzzle map for his children, and the children were greatly puzzled as they tried to put this puzzle map together. They could not get the pieces to fit; they tried again and again, and again, but they failed. At last one of the children noticed that there was a part of a man's face on the other side of one piece of the puzzle, and he said, "Oh, there's part of a man on the other side of the map; let's turn all the pieces over, and if we get the figure of the man, we have got the map." So they put the man together, and in putting the man together,

they got the puzzle map together. You cannot understand the Christ of God, apart from the Word of God. You cannot understand the revelation of God unless you see the purpose of that revelation is to make known His Son, and thus make known Himself. It is as you see the Christ in the Word that you begin to see the Word in all its grace. It is as you see the living Word that you will understand the written Word, and you will see that the grand purpose which God had in sending His Son into the world, was to meet the great need of humanity, in providing a Savior for you and for me. If you see the Christ in the Word, you will never doubt for one moment that the written Word is indeed the Word of God because of the Christ it reveals. If you destroy faith in the written Word, you destroy faith in the living Word. If you take away from the authority of the written Word, you take away from the authority of the living Word. If you minimize the written Word, you minimize the Christ; and if you begin to minimize the written Word, you will find that you have nothing but an empty tomb instead of a living Saviour.

In the book of Leviticus, there are six

offerings which are mentioned which are typical of Christ. They are the burnt-offering, meat-offering, sin-offering, trespass-offering, the peace-offering, and the drink-offering, and every one of these offerings is typical of Christ in some phase of His work.

The meat-offering, which was made of fine flour mingled with oil, is typical of Christ in the perfect humanity of His life and work. There was no flaw in His nature, there was no spot in His humanity. He was without sin, He was separate from sin. He could look the world in the face and say, "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" It was essential for Him to be without sin, for only such an one could take up the question of our soul's salvation and meet the need of our sinnership.

The sin-offering was taken outside the camp and wholly consumed, and is typical of Christ, who went outside the camp for us, not only bearing our sins up to the tree, but as the sin-offering was consumed by the fire of God's judgment, Christ has stood in our place, and suffered in our stead, and borne the brunt of God's judgment against our sin, so that if the sinner believes in Christ, he is accepted and is cleared from every charge of guilt.

The trespass-offering is another phase of the work of Christ. It is typical of Christ answering for our actual sins. Not only has He been judged for sin, but His atonement is the ground whereby God forgives our actual sins. Don't confuse sin and sins. Sin is root, sins are the fruit. Sin is the cause, sins are the effect. Sin is condemned in the death of Christ. Sins are forgiven because of the blood of Christ, so that we can say, "In whom we have redemption, through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses according to the riches of His grace." Our actual sins are forgiven, our sin is never forgiven. Sin is condemned, judged and dealt with by God in Jesus Christ on the cross although God forgives our sins.

The peace-offering tells us that Christ has made peace by the blood of His cross. You can never make peace with God. You are starting on an impossible task if you think you can. A lady once told me that she was going to make her peace with God. I said to her, "Let me discourage you from that, but I will tell you something that is better. Christ has made peace by the blood of His cross. Receive the Christ of Calvary, who is the Peace-maker, and you have peace with God."

Christ is the great Peacemaker and when we receive Him, we can say, "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

The drink-offering. What does it signify? We read that Christ poured out His soul. The blood shed means the life given. We sometimes hear people say a drop of His precious blood could atone for our sin. "He poured out His soul unto death." Your life and mine were forfeited on account of sin. He has given Himself, as the apostle Paul puts it, "He loved me and gave Himself for me." Oh, wondrous gift, thank God that Jesus Christ gave Himself! Nothing less, nothing more. Nothing else will suffice, nothing more is needed, glory to His name! An old Puritan once said, "Sin has made a great sore, but thank God, the plaster of Christ's atonement is greater than the sore."

The burnt-offering that was all for God was the very opposite to the sin-offering which was consumed wholly outside the camp. The burnt-offering had to be laid upon the altar inside the tabernacle court, and it was there wholly consumed and it went up to God as a "sweet smelling savor." In connection with this there is one of the

beautiful touches of the Spirit of God in writing His Word, namely, the two words which He uses, in speaking of burning in connection with the sin-offering and the burnt-offering. The word to burn in association with the sin-offering means to consume; in connection with the burnt-offering it means to burn in order to bring out the perfume of the incense, and so the burnt-offering went up to God as "a sweet smelling savor." That is typical of Christ, who gave Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for "a sweet smelling savor." Christ was not only judged for our sin, He did all to the glory of God. He gave Himself in His death, to do the will of God, thus, that death went up to God as "a sweet smelling savor," and hence He could say, as He looked into His Father's face, "I have glorified Thee on the earth, I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do."

Are not these offerings practical illustrations of the truth of inspiration? In these six offerings we have a perfect picture of how Christ has met the sin of man, has met divine justice, has met the claim of the law, has overthrown the power of death and He has perfectly glorified God so that in that perfect sacrifice, we can rest. The death of

Jesus Christ opens up more vistas, satisfies more needs, meets more longings, gives more blessings, and causes greater sacrifices to be made than anything else. We may well sing of the death of Jesus Christ, and thank God for "the cross that towers o'er the wrecks of time." Is your heart burdened on account of sin, your conscience smarting on account of guilt, as you think of what you deserve, and the devil says, "There is no hope for you"? But there is hope, because Jesus has died.

"Though we're sinners every one,
Jesus died!
And though our crown of bliss is gone,
Jesus died!
We may be cleansed from every stain,
We may be crowned with bliss again,
And in that land of glory reign,
Jesus died!"

Oh, won't you, in the quiet of this moment, as you think of that Man who hung on that cross, on that green hill far away, nearly two thousand years ago, won't you trust Him, won't you look to Him and in the quiet of your own heart say to Him, "Lord Jesus, I have sinned against Thee, I have despised Thee, I would not have Thee,

but now by Thy grace I take Thee as my Saviour, and my whole being is yours"? And as you do so, you will be able to say:—

"I have no other argument,
I have no other plea;
It is enough that Jesus died,
And that He died for me."

And as your heart and faith thus take hold of Him, He takes hold of you and He makes you His child and He gives you His peace, and gives you eternal life.

IV. *The Bible is the Word of God, because of its Minute Fulfilments.*

Have you ever tried to find out the minute predictions which have been given of the Lord Jesus Christ before He came into this world?

To Adam was made known the manner of Christ's coming in that He should be the seed. To Abraham it was revealed that He should be of the nation of which Abraham was the head. To Jacob: The tribe from whence He should come. To David: that Christ should be of his family. Notice how the circle gets smaller and smaller. To Micah: the town in which He should be born. To Malachi: Christ should be preceded by a forerunner. To Daniel: The ac-

tual date in which He should be rejected. To Zechariah: He should be sold for thirty pieces of silver. To Isaiah: that He should die for the transgressors, be numbered with the wicked; that He would be buried in a rich man's grave and that He would make intercession for us. In the Psalms: The manner of Christ's death, that He would be crucified, which was altogether contrary to the Jewish thought. Their thought of putting any one to death, when they deserved the extreme penalty, was stoning to death. Here is the Spirit of God predicting Christ's suffering according to the Roman law in that He was crucified and numbered with transgressors.

These are a few indications of the minute predictions which we find in the Old Testament about Jesus and His coming. It is one of the most interesting studies to ponder the delicate touches of the Spirit of God. You know that one of the main things with an artist when he is painting a picture, is the delicate touches and the little things which go to make up the finish and the beauty of the picture. Attention to details is the secret of success in anything.

There are no little things in God's universe. Every little thing reveals His great-

ness, and so when we come to the Word of God we find He is very careful. He never uses the singular when He means the plural, and when He uses the plural He does not mean the singular. He said, "not to seeds," as of many, but "to seed as of one," indicating at once the distinction between the seed and seeds, between the plural and the singular, between the many and the one—Christ. The Holy Spirit never says, "Scripture" when He means "Scriptures," He never says "Scriptures" when He means "Scripture." When Christ was on the cross it is said in the nineteenth chapter of John, "The Scripture said, Not a bone of Him shall be broken," and in order that the Scripture might be fulfilled we find that the bones of the Lord Jesus Christ were not broken as in the case of the two thieves who were crucified with Him. How particular the Spirit of the Word of God is. Notice the difference between "shoulders" and "shoulder." In the ninth chapter of the prophecy of Isaiah, we read that "the government shall be upon His *shoulder*." He only needs one shoulder for the government of the word. A shoulder in Scripture is typical of strength. In the fifteenth chapter of Luke's gospel when the shepherd comes for

his sheep, he does not, as you find it represented in pictures, put it on his shoulder, but he puts it upon his *shoulders*, and the sheep being put around his shoulders and the shepherd holding the feet of the sheep, the sheep would be comfortable. And how far did the shepherd carry the sheep? He carried it right home, he carried it all the way. The shepherd did not say, "You are a good-for-nothing sheep, you got lost, and you deserve to walk all the way home." He just took it home, and that is what the Lord does for us. If He didn't carry us we should never get there. This is the point I want you to notice. He only needs one shoulder for the government of the world, but He needs both shoulders when He brings home a lost sinner. He only needs one-half of His strength in order to put things in their right place and to make everything adjusted to His will, but when it is the question of the salvation of a poor lost soul, He needs to put out all His strength. Oh, let me tell you, never slight Jesus Christ! Not only did He shed His precious blood for you on the cross, but He is expending Himself in order that you may be blessed, and if you will but trust Him, He puts out all His strength in blessing you, and if you only

let Him, He will make a man or a woman of you, and He will keep you by His grace, and He will carry you right through. There are some people who are all concerned about carrying themselves and holding on to the Lord. Let Him hold on to you. You trust and He will keep you. Trust Him. They that trust Him wholly find Him wholly true.

V. The Bible is the Word of God, because of the Manner of its Utterance.

Have you ever tried to analyze some of the expressions of the Scripture? Have you ever tried to weigh up some of the words which are used to describe what God does? We read in the third chapter of the epistle to the Ephesians that "God is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think." That is, the manner in which God is able to answer our prayers as we allow Him to work in us according to the purpose of His grace, and as we are found in line with His will. He is not only able to give what we *ask*, but *all* we ask, and not only all we ask, but all we *think*. Let us make a pyramid; and put on the top *ask*, underneath *all* we ask, then all that we *think*, then *all* we think. We think of a great many things for which we do not ask; and

in addition to all we ask or think, He is able to do *above* all we ask or think; and not only "above all we ask or think but He is able to do "*abundantly* above all we ask or think"; and He is not only able to do abundantly but He is able to do "*exceedingly* abundantly above all we ask or think." Would any man in penning any words, as to the ability of what he is able to do, use such words as these? These words indicate that they are divine in their origin.

If I take a glass and fill it with water, till the water runs over the brim, that is over fulness; but if I continue to pour the water into the glass till the cloth upon which it stands is drenched, that not only is overfulness, but an over-overfulness. If I still continue to pour into the glass, till not only the table cloth is drenched, but the water flows on the carpet, and all over the floor, that would be an over, over, over, fulness. That is the sentence that is used here. God is able to do. He not only gives us much, over much, over over much, but over over over much. The word "*abundantly*" means over much. Then the word "*above*" expresses something which is above over much. And the word *exceedingly* still further intensifies the fulness of God's

grace; so that God not only gives an excess, but a super excess, yea, a super, super excess.

I once tried to picture what this meant by illustrating it with the feeding of the five thousand. After the feeding of the five thousand they gathered up of the broken pieces twelve baskets full. That is, the broken pieces were not fragments which the people had handled, but were broken pieces ready to give out, so that there was more to give out after the five thousand had been fed than there was to begin with. Now supposing that the twelve baskets full had multiplied at the same rate, there would be one hundred and forty-four baskets full after sixty thousand people had been fed. But supposing the one hundred and forty-four baskets had been multiplied at the same rate as before, there would be 1,728 baskets of broken fragments after 720,000 people had been fed. The twelve baskets full illustrate the word "abundantly," that is, over much. The one hundred and forty-four baskets full illustrate the word "above," that is, an excess beyond over much. And the seventeen hundred and twenty-eight baskets full illustrate the word "exceeding." That is, an

excess in addition to an excess, which is an addition to over much.

That illustrates the abundant abundance which God promises to give to those who trust Him and fulfil His will. I put it to you again; no man on earth could conceive of such an expression. You must get into the house before you know the provision.

VI. The Bible is the Word of God, because of the Results it Achieves.

“By their fruits shall ye know them.” I should like to know what atheism or agnosticism or any of the other “isms” have done to improve the condition of the world. How many orphanages has atheism built? How many Christian institutions have been reared by the other “isms” of to-day that are not in touch with Jesus Christ. What are the “isms” of to-day doing that are apart from Him? They are pulling down, they are hindering. But the Lion of the tribe of Judah shall prevail. We are not afraid of the Bible. We are not defending the Bible. It can defend itself. As some one said, “I noticed when I was in the zoological gardens there was a big lion in the cage and there was a boy teasing him. Suddenly the lion stretched himself and yawned and the boy skeedadled pretty fast.” The

Word of God will stand. We are not afraid of the Word of God, but we are afraid of the people that don't believe the Word of God. Some of you may have heard of the man who was visiting the Fijiian Islands. He did not believe in the Word of God, and was jeering at a Fijiian chief, who was a wise man, and believed the Word of God. The Fijiian asked him to come round to the back and he showed him a great big caldron and a large club. He said, "You have been telling me you don't believe in the Bible; you don't believe in the Gospel. If I believed as you believe, do you know what I would have done? You see that club and that caldron? If I believed as you believe, when you came to see me I would have clubbed you and I would have cooked you and I would have had a good feed. But it is the Word of God and the Gospel of Jesus Christ which has made the difference in my heart and life. It is no use telling me the Bible is not the Word of God." Where the Word of God is received in its entirety, it makes the man who receives it like to Christ. It is a well-known scientific fact that insects become like the thing upon which they feed, and this is perfectly true of us. You become like the Word

of God if you feed upon it. Don't feed on religious garbage. The Word of God will give you grace and power and strength. Ponder its precepts, think of it prayerfully, practice it fully, live it entirely and you will find as you grip the Word of God, the Word of God will grip your heart and life too. I went to see a gentleman who is a great electrician and he asked me to sit on a chair. I did so and a friend who was with me commenced to laugh at me. I asked him what was the matter. "I wish you could see yourself," he said; "your hair is standing on end." I was charged with electricity, and presently I began to put out my hand and he could feel the electricity that was coming out of my fingers. When we are charged with the electricity of God's Word through reading His Word, we shall find we have power to keep us in touch with the mighty power of the Holy Ghost through His Word.

I tell you this, that God's power comes mainly through His Word, and the reason there are so many weak Christians is because they do not ponder sufficiently His Word. The Word of God is quick and powerful. That Word He gives to you: take care how you treat it, for on your treat-

ment of that will depend your soul's salvation. Remember what Christ says, "These things I say unto you, that ye might be saved. He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life. He that believeth not on the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." Remember what it means to be eternally separated from Jesus Christ. "Shall not see life." Then it must be endless separation. It means to be separated from Him who is the life and love and joy and power. He has said it and you can't get away from Him. You will have to deal with Him, in one of two ways, receive Him as the Saviour or He will deal with you as Judge.

A lady asked a solicitor if he would undertake her case, and plead her interests in a certain case which was to be brought before the courts. He was quite willing to be her advocate, but she hesitated at the last moment to let the matter go forward, and waited until a short time afterwards. He then said to her, "I am sorry I cannot be your lawyer, for since you came to me last time I have been asked to be judge in your case."

IS ETERNAL PUNISHMENT, PUNISHMENT ETERNAL?

MANY will have been pained by a statement of Rev. R. J. Campbell, of the City Temple, London, as they have read his sermon on God's Purpose in Redemption. He says that "The doctrine of eternal torment has its origin in the Church of Rome, and the Church of Rome in the days of her corruption, before there was Protestantism, it is true, but not before there was the Christianity of a larger hope. The Alexandrian Fathers, whose influence is felt in Protestantism to-day, found no difficulty in preaching the evangel of Jesus Christ along with that larger Gospel, which would hold out to the impenitent upon the other side of death, a further period of choice, a further moral crisis."

Mr. Campbell says, in so many words, without giving further quotations, that all men will ultimately be saved; or, at least, on "the other side of death a further period of choice will be given." To such teaching one can but reply that it is unscriptural and immoral.

Mr. Campbell's teaching is unscriptural.

If we get into the realm of speculation we can believe anything. But if the Scripture is

our Court of Appeal, then we must abide by its utterances, and submit to its authority. Dr. Joseph Cook has aptly said, "One cannot escape the doctrine of eternal punishment without lowering the standard of inspiration."

Mr. Campbell says: "No man has a right, in reading the words of Jesus, to read into *aionios* ('eternal') the meaning 'everlasting.' *Aion* means an age. I once took the trouble to go through the passages in classical Greek in which that word is used, to find in what senses it has been employed, and I found that the least frequent of them is everlasting; the more common was that which is contained in the very root, *aion*, age-long; and, lastly, and in that poetic sense to which we cannot so easily fix limiting boundaries, that which is outside of and above time altogether. It never does mean, cannot mean, time plus time, plus time, plus *ad infinitum*."

There is a measure of truth in his statements; but as

"A lie which is all a lie
May be met and fought outright;
But a lie which is part of truth,
Is a harder matter to fight."

So Mr. Campbell's partial statements are the more dangerous because of what he withholds.

Let us go carefully into particulars. Undoubtedly *aion* is used in a limited sense; but it is also used to describe an indefinite period. The connection must determine in which sense it is to be used. When we turn to the pages of Holy Writ, we find it used in one of three senses. As to the past, in Luke i. 70, reference is made to the prophets who have been "since the *world* (*aion*) began;" as to the present, Christ speaks of "the care of the *world*" (*aion*), and of "the end of the *world*" (*aion*) in Matthew xiii. 22, 39: and as to the future, Christ is said to be above all, not only "in this *world* (*aion*), but also in that which is to come" (Ephes. i. 21); and we are also told God's purpose in saving believers is that in "the *ages* (*aions*) to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ" (Ephes. ii. 7). Thus it is seen at once that when *aion* occurs by itself, it may, or may not, indicate a definite or an indefinite period.

But while *aion* by itself is used to designate an age past, present or to come, and duration limited or unlimited, yet, when used in combination with certain prepositions it expresses the idea of *indefinite duration—endlessness*. Such as we find in connection with the words "for ever." In the New Testament this has

become a settled and uniform formula where *aion* is found with *cis*, invariably setting forth, in all the sixty-two places where it occurs, the idea of endless duration. The words together are only used with reference to the future. They are used nineteen times with reference to Christ:—

“Reign over the house of Jacob *for ever*” (Luke i. 33).

“The Son abideth *for ever*” (John viii. 35).

“Christ abideth *for ever*” (John xii. 34).

“God, blessed *for ever*” (Rom. ix. 5).

“Christ, which is blessed *for evermore*” (II. Cor. xi. 31).

“Thy throne, O God, is *for ever* and *ever*” (Heb. i. 8).

“Thou art a priest *for ever*” (Heb. v. 6; vi. 20; vii. 17, 21).

“Abideth *for ever*” (Heb. vii. 24, R. V.).

“Who liveth *for ever* and *ever*” (Rev. iv. 9, 10; v. 14; x. 6).

“Reign *for ever* and *ever*” (Rev. xi. 15).

“Son, who is consecrated *for evermore*” (Heb. vii. 28).

“Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day and *for ever*” (Heb. xiii. 8).

“Alive *for evermore*” (Rev. i. 18).

They are used three times with reference to God:—

“Creator, who is blessed *for ever*” (Rom. i. 25).

“His righteousness remaineth *for ever*” (II. Cor. ix. 9).

“God who liveth *for ever and ever*” (Rev. xv. 7).

They are found fifteen times in ascribing praise to God and Christ:—

“The power and glory *for ever*” (Matt. vi. 13).

“To whom be glory *for ever*” (Rom. xi. 36; xvi. 27; Gal. i. 5; Phil. iv. 20; I. Tim. i. 17; II. Tim. iv. 18; Heb. xiii. 21; I. Peter iv. 11; v. 11; II. Peter iii. 18; Jude 25, R.V.; Rev. i. 6, v. 13, vii. 12).

They are used once in connection with the Holy Spirit:—

“He may abide with you *for ever*” (John xiv. 16).

They are found twice in relation to the Word of God:—

“Which liveth and abideth *for ever*” (I Peter i. 23).

“Word of the Lord remaineth *for ever*” (I. Peter i. 25).

They are used seven times in a negative sense:—

“Hath *never*” (not *for ever*) “forgiveness” (Mark iii. 29).

“Shall *never*” (not *for ever*) “thirst” (John iv. 14).

“Shall *never*” (not *for ever*) “see death” (John viii. 51).

“Shall *never*” (not *for ever*) “taste of death” (John viii. 52).

“Shall *never*” (not *for ever*) “perish” (John x. 28).

“Shall *never*” (not *for ever*) “die” (John xi. 26).

“Thou shalt *never*” (not *for ever*) “wash my feet” (John xiii. 8).

They are used four times in various connections :

“Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward *for ever*” (Matt. xxi. 19; Mark xi. 14).

“Abideth not in the house *for ever*” (John viii. 35).

“Eat no flesh *for evermore*” (I. Cor. viii. 13, R.V.).

They are associated six times in describing the permanence of the believer’s blessings.

“To Abraham and his seed *for ever*” (Luke i. 55).

“Live *for ever*” (John vi. 51, 58).

“He that doeth the will of God abideth *for ever*” (I. John ii. 17).

“Truth *** shall be with you *for ever*” (II. John 2).

“Reign *for ever and ever*” (Rev. xxii. 5).

They are used five times with reference to the punishment of the wicked:—

“The blackness of darkness is reserved *for ever*” (II. Peter ii. 17; Jude 13).

“The smoke of their torment ascendeth up *for ever and ever*” (Rev. xiv. 11).

“Her smoke rose up *for ever and ever*” (Rev. xix. 3).

“Tormented day and night *for ever and ever*” (Rev. xx. 10).

For the sake of conciseness let me give seven references out of the above eight sections.

God, as the Creator, is said to be “blessed *for ever*” (Rom. i. 25). By the very necessity of His own nature He must ever be the Blessed One. Being what He is He must ever be what He is. He is not like the sun which is consuming itself, and shines at the expense of its own consumption. In His giving He never impoverishes Himself, nor is He influenced by His environment. Being independent of all He is dependent upon none, but ever shines by His own intrinsic and inexhaustible light; therefore He can never cease to be the Blessed One.

Christ, in the immutability of His nature and the unchangeableness of His love, is said to be “the same yesterday, to-day, and *for ever*”

(Heb. xiii. 8). Whether it be in the yesterday of His perfect life, and His all-sufficient atonement, or in the to-day of His priestly intercession and His succoring aid, or in the future of His intense glory and heart satisfaction, there is no ebb in the glory of His divine-human personality; but, like the mighty flow of the grand St. Lawrence, as it rushes past the thousand islands to the sea, so the Lord is the same in the constancy of His grace and the unchangeableness of His character.

Among the many precious promises which Christ gave to His disciples in His parting benediction, was the one that He would pray His Father for another Comforter, who, as He says, will "abide with you *for ever*" (John xiv. 16). One of the most striking types of the Holy Spirit is Abraham's servant, Eliezer. As he acted for Abraham with reference to Isaac and Rebekah, so the Holy Spirit acts for God with reference to Christ and His Church. A significant omission is that there is no record of Eliezer's death, which may be taken as an illustration of the continuity of the Holy Spirit's service. God, in the trinity of His personality, takes an interest in His people. No one Person of the Trinity takes an interest more than another, but each has His own constant work.

And since this is so the Holy Spirit must ever be an abiding Presence.

When Christ cursed the fig-tree He said: "No man eat fruit from thee henceforth *for ever*" (Mark xi. 14, R. V.). The consequence was the tree began to wither, and became for ever fruitless. There would be no reviving power to give it a resurrection. The "*for ever*" brought an endless curse.

In speaking of Himself as the Living Bread, Christ promises that they who eat Him, or receive Him as God's provision, "*shall live for ever*" (John vi. 51, 58). If we remember that these words stand in striking contrast, they come to us with added force. Christ is the Living Bread as contrasted with the daily manna. The one is lasting and the other was transient. One meets a spiritual necessity and bestows a lasting blessing. The other met a temporal need, and was only temporary in its blessing.

Again and again we have an ascription of praise to God in the formula, "To whom be glory *for ever and ever*" (Gal. i. 5). Since He is the Worthy One, He is ever worthy, and ever will be, of our praises. As the burnt offering in the tabernacle, as long as the tabernacle continued, was to be offered day by day continually, and ascended to God as "*a sweet savor*" (Ex. xxix. 38-42), so, seeing God will

ever be, the praise which is ever due from His creatures will ever be ascending to Him. Unlike the offering in the tabernacle, when the one ceased to exist, the other ceased to be offered. He, abiding ever, receives the praise of His creatures to endless ages.

Now we come to the last of the seven references, which is to the ungodly, of whom it is said, there is reserved for them "the blackness of darkness *for ever*" (Jude 13). Awful reservation culminating in endless perdition! We can come to no other conclusion than that the *for ever* in this case, as in the other six, means *unendingness*. Even supposing for one moment there will be another chance after death, what ground have we for supposing that they who have neglected the chance in this life will embrace it then? By analogy, by fact, and by natural law, things, when they are once on the down grade, get worse instead of better; and this the Bible confirms, for almost its last utterance is, "He that is unrighteous let him do unrighteousness still; and he that is filthy let him be made filthy still; and he that is righteous let him do righteousness still; and he that is holy let Him be made holy still (Rev. xxii. 11, R. V.).

Permanence of character declares that it is not a question of *may*, or *can*, or *may be*, but of

will; and since this indicates there will be no desire to repent, how can there be repentance to life? Milton makes Satan exclaim:—

“Farewell, happy fields,
Where joy forever dwells; hail horrors, hail
Infernal world, and thou, profoundest hell,
Receive thy new possessor; one who brings
A mind not to be changed by time or place.
The mind is its own place, and in itself
Can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven.
What matter where I be, if I be still the same?
Me miserable! Which way shall I fly;
Infinite wrath, and infinite despair?
Which way I fly is hell; *myself am hell;*
And in the lowest deep, a lower deep—
Still threatening to devour me—opens wide,
To which the hell I suffer seems a heaven.”

Mark the words:—

“A mind not to be changed by time or place,”
proclaims the fixedness of his character;
“What matter where I be if I be still the same?”
Ah, that's the rub. A hellish nature makes
“A hell of heaven.”

And since, as Satan says,

“Myself am hell,”
he makes his hell wherever he may be.

“Time or place”

cannot alter what he is, and so he ever is in the hell of what he is.

The same is true of those who place themselves under his dominion by their doings.

In further considering *aion* with *eis*, rendered in our version “for ever,” it may be well to note the three forms of its usage. There is the *intense* form, which is expressed in the words “unto the age,” which is used by Christ when He says that the one who eats of the Living Bread “shall live *unto the age*” (John vi. 51); there is the *intenser* form, which signifies *unto the ages*, as when God is said to be “blessed *unto the ages*” (Rom. i. 25); and there is the *intensest* form, as expressed in the ascription of praise to Christ in the “To Him be glory and might *unto the ages of the ages*” (Rev. i. 6). Each of these forms of expression represents eternity.

Unto the age, or, as Rotherham renders it, *age-abiding*, and says, “Age-abiding, that is, lasting for an indefinite age; or abiding from age to age.” It goes without the saying that the abiding age stands out in contrast to the past age and the present, which were not abiding—that is, permanent—and, therefore, “*age-abiding*” cannot refer to anything but eternity.

By antithesis we sometimes can get a more positive statement; thus every negative state-

ment implies a positive issue. For instance, if there is only one means of escape from a house on fire, and that means is pointed out to one in danger, and he is told he will not perish if he avails himself of the means, by implication he is told he will perish if he does not obey the injunction.

Let us look at the use of *eis ton aionia*, as it occurs in the gospels, where it is translated “never”; and as we do so, we shall see the pertinent force of recognizing that, in the negative statement, we have, by implication, a most positive utterance.

Christ said to the woman of Samaria, that those who drink of the Living Water “shall never (*eis ton aionia*) thirst” (John iv. 14). The blessedness in such a statement assures the believer that he has in Christ an endless source of satisfaction; but, on the other hand, those who do not receive Him have endless dissatisfaction in wanting Him.

Christ said of those who keep His sayings, which is another way of expressing obedience to Him—“shall never (*eis ton aionia*) see death” (John viii. 51); that is, shall never be separated from Him who is the Life, for the death referred to means separation from Him who is the source and soul of all bliss. What is the logical conclusion? If you say a per-

son shall receive a certain thing if he fulfils certain conditions, such as a boy shall receive a prize if he masters his lessons, the reasonable conclusion is that, if he does not fulfil the conditions, he will miss the thing promised. Thus, while those who obey Christ shall "never see death," on the other hand those who do not know Him must enter into that state implied, namely, death through the abiding age.

Christ assures those who are His sheep "they shall *never* (*eis ton aionia*) *perish*" (John x. 28). God gave His Son to die for those who would believe in Him, that they "should not perish," that is, be lost; for, as Cremer points out, to perish is to be ruined. He says: "Loss of life is not necessarily implied; the main idea is *ruin*, and that may be done without killing. "It is all over with me; I am lost, ruined," in the case of a person whose fortune or reputation is lost, destroyed. The fundamental thought is not by any means annihilation, or extinction of life, but an injurious force which the subject exerts, or cannot hinder."

They who possess Christ, and are possessed by Him, shall ever love the good, for they possess all good in possessing Him; but the opposite is to those who are not His sheep; they will perish, that is, they are eternally ruined.

Christ, in referring to the sin against the Holy Spirit says, "He that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath *never* (*eis ton aionia*) forgiveness (Mark iii. 29). Thus there was and may be, a sin which is an age-abiding sin, as Rotherham renders it, "unto times age-abiding; but is guilty of an age-abiding sin." An eternal sin calls for eternal punishment; for, as Joseph Cook says, "Eternal sin is a Scriptural phrase. He who sinneth against the Holy Ghost is in danger of "*eternal sin*." Theodore Parker used to say that the profoundest expressions in the New Testament are those which are most likely to have been correctly reported. What phrase on this theme is profounder than "*eternal sin*?" Dean Alford well says that "it is to the critical treatment of the sacred text, that we owe the restoration of such important and deep-reaching expressions as this." Lange calls it "a strong and pregnant expression."

"It is not the best way in which to teach the truth of future punishment, to say that a man is punished forever and forever for the sins of that hand's breadth of duration we call time. If the soul does not repent of these with contrition, and not merely with attrition, the nature of things forbids its peace. But the Biblical and natural truth is, that prolonged dissim-

ilarity of feeling with God may end in eternal sin. *If there is eternal sin there will be eternal punishment.* Final permanence of character under the laws of judicial blindness and the self-propagating power of sin, is the truth emphasized by both God's Word and His works."

Unto the ages of the ages. Without dwelling on the intenser form, *unto the ages*,* which does not occur in connection with the punishment of the wicked, we shall pass on to the intensest form—*unto the ages of the ages*—and confine our meditation to one book of the New Testament, viz., the Revelation. The expression, for ever and ever, occurs fourteen times in this book, and is used alike of God, of Christ, of saints and of sinners. Of God, to whom glory and dominion are ascribed *for ever and for ever*" (Rev. i. 6, vii. 12); and who is also said to be the One who "*liveth for ever and ever*" (Rev. iv. 9, 10, vii. 12, x. 6, xv. 7). Of Christ who says, "*I am alive for evermore*" (Rev. i. 18). He is worshipped as the Lamb who "*liveth for ever and ever*"; and of Him it is said, "*He shall reign for ever and ever*" (Rev. v. 13, 14, xi. 15). Of saints who shall

* The plural form of "forever" rendered by Rotherham *unto the ages*, occurs in Luke i. 33; Romans i. 25, ix. 5, xi. 36, xvi. 37; II. Corinthians xi. 31; Hebrews xiii. 8.

“reign *forever and ever*” (Rev. xxii. 5). And of sinners, of whom it is said, “The smoke of their torment ascendeth up *for ever and for ever*, and they have no rest day or night” (Rev. xiv. 11, xix. 3); and of Satan and his co-workers, it says they shall “be tormented day and night *for ever and ever*” (Rev. xx. 10).

“Here then, in this one book, this intensest form is used of God, of Christ, of the saints and of the wicked. When the strongest and most emphatic form in which the Greek tongue can express the idea of endless duration, is employed to describe alike the duration of God, the life of Christ, the blessedness of the righteous, and the punishment of the wicked, is it competent for us to regard it as meaning limited duration in one case and endless duration in the others? The formula itself is unlimited, and, so far as we can see, there is nothing in the subject—the soul of man, or in the nature of hell, or in the Word and purpose of God, or in the ends to be answered by punishment—that *requires limitation*. Then, who dare limit it? The burden of proof rests with those who impose a limited and unwarranted sense in one case, and not in the others. As humble truth seekers, we dare not do it till better reasons have been produced than have yet appeared.”

The late Joseph Cook, of Boston, once said: "The theory that a man may die a Cain, an Iscariot, or a kidnapper, and yet come out right, is one which I never will take the responsibility of proclaiming, for I know it will do harm; and, because I know it will not work well, I, for one, am convinced that it is out of accord with the nature of things and so is wholly unscientific." And it is not only "wholly unscientific," but it is also unscriptural; for, both in the realm of nature and in the realm of revelation, we have it proved beyond all question that habit leads to permanence of character. Besides, the tendency of the teaching of those who tell us there is another chance after death, is immoral, for that which is immoral in its tendency is immoral in itself; and, therefore, is distinctly opposed to the law of God, which is holy, just and good.

The Greek adjective *aionios*, rendered *everlasting* and *eternal*, occurs seventy times in the New Testament. It is opposed to what is for a season, transient and temporary, and is especially associated with the blessings of divine revelation, by which it is clearly denoted that they do not belong to what is transitory. Over forty times the word is used to describe the character of the life which the Gospel bestows—namely, eternal.

In looking at the connections in which *aionios* is used, we find that it may be classified under seven divisions.

I. God. In speaking of the mystery which is revealed in the Gospel, we are told that it is now made manifest by the “Scriptures of the prophets according to the commandment of the *everlasting God*” (Rom. xvi. 26). Here God is described as the Everlasting One. He is what He ever was, and He ever will be what He is. Manton says: “There is no wrinkle on the brow of Eternity,” and we may add, there never will be. We may say with Hannah More:

“Thou art ever present, Power supreme!
Not circumscribed by time, nor fixed to space,
Confined to altars, nor to temples bound,
In wealth, in want, in freedom, or in chains,
In dungeons, or on thrones, the faithful find Thee.”

II. Christ. Christ is described as the “True God and *Eternal Life*” (I. John v. 20). And an ascription of praise is given to Him in the following words: “To whom be honor and power *everlasting*” (I. Tim. vi. 16). How luminous is the expression which describes what Christ is, in His unendingness, as the *Eternal Life*. He, by becoming Man, changed His state; but He never did, nor can He, alter His personality. Addison says:—

“ ‘Tis the divinity that stirs within me;
‘Tis heaven itself that points an hereafter,
And intimates eternity to man.”

But that which intimates Christ as the *Eternal* Life is not that which “stirs within Him,” as indicating an infusion which assures Him of what is to be, but His own inherent qualities which proclaim Him in His personality as the Eternal God; hence being what He is, He must ever be what He is.

III. The Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is called the “*Eternal Spirit*” (Heb. ix. 14) in speaking of the Power which enabled Christ to offer Himself without spot to God, as the sacrifice for sin. These words, which speak of Christ as the all-sufficient sacrifice, contrasted with the sacrifices offered under the Levitical law, in their vitality and lastingness are like the oasis in the desert, fed by perennial waters, which is ever fresh and green; in contrast to the mirage, which only brings disappointment and dissatisfaction to the weary traveler.

IV. The Past. There are three places in the New Testament where we read of “*past times eternal*.” The apostle speaks of “the revelation of the mystery which hath been kept in silence through *times eternal*.” (Rom. xvi. 25, R.V.); that mystery evidently is the formation of the Church, which is Christ’s mystical body, and is

elsewhere spoken of as the “new man.” Paul, in calling attention to the “holy calling” of believers, says that that holy calling is “according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before *times eternal*” (II. Tim. i. 9, R.V.), and in calling attention to the “hope of eternal life,” says that God promised it before “times eternal” (Tit. i 2, R.V.). We are confronted, as we look at the expression “*times eternal*” with a seeming difficulty, for if the “eternal times” here represent the eternity of the past, how could God promise anything before eternity? Such an expression would be a contradiction in terms. The fact is, the manifestation, and the grace, and the promise were given in time, but the purpose behind these was fixed in the Eternal One.

Dean Alford in speaking of the last of the above Scriptures, says: “The solution of the difficulty, that no promise was actually made till the race of man existed, must be found by regarding, as in the place in II. Timothy, the construction as a mixed one—compounded of the actual promise made in time, and the divine purpose, from which that promise sprung, fixed in eternity. Thus, as there God is said to have given us grace in Christ from eternal ages, meaning that the gift took place as the result

of a divine purpose fixed from eternity, so here He is said to have promised eternal life before eternal times, meaning that the promise took place as the result of a purpose fixed from eternity."

V. The Gospel. An angel is described in the Book of Revelation as "flying" in mid heaven, having an "*eternal gospel*" (Rev. xiv. 6, R.V.).

Without going into the prophetic setting of the Scripture, we may take the expression, the "*eternal gospel*," as describing one characteristic of the Gospel of the grace of God. For, as Dean Alford says, "The epithet 'everlasting' here only applied to the gospel, belongs to it as from everlasting to everlasting, like Him whose Word it is: in contrast to the enemies of God whose destruction is in view."

Some one, some time ago, published a book with the title, *The Gospels of Yesterday*. How striking the sentence, "The Gospels of Yesterday, as contrasted with the "*eternal gospel*." The gospel which we preach, like the Christ of whom it speaks, is "the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever."

VI. Believer's Blessings. Believers are secured in a covenant made between the Father and the Son on their account, and which has been ratified by that which is called the "*blood of the Everlasting Covenant*" (Heb. xiii. 20).

We are liberated from sin by an "*eternal redemption*" by Christ's sacrifice and power (Heb. ix. 12). We are saved with an "*eternal salvation*" which was, and is, and shall be effected by Him who is called the Author of it (Heb. v. 9). We are called by the effectual grace of God to an "*eternal glory*" (I. Peter v. 10). In contrast to Israel's blessing, which was of a temporary nature, we possess an "*eternal inheritance*" (Heb. ix. 15). We are assured that, if we are diligent in adding to our faith the graces which give it fiber and firmness, we shall have an abundant entrance into the "*everlasting kingdom*" of our Lord (II. Peter i. 11).

In contrast to the affliction which we may be called to suffer, said to be a light affliction and but for a moment, we shall have an exceeding and "*eternal weight of glory*" (II. Cor. iv. 17). We are told that the things which are seen are temporal, and that those which are unseen are "*eternal*" (II. Cor. iv. 18). We are cheered, amid the stress and storms of life, by the assurance that God hath given us "*everlasting consolation*" (II. Thess. ii. 16). We are assured by Christ that those to whom we have been a help in this life, in the life to come shall receive us unto "*everlasting habitations*" (Luke xvi. 9). We know, although our present state is compared to a tent which may be

struck at any moment, we have a "*house*" which is "*eternal* in the heavens" (II. Cor. v. 1). And that which is the climax of all, and which may be said to include every one of the other blessings, is "*eternal life*" (John iii. 15, 16, 36).

Without going into the many contrasts suggested by the above Scriptures, we can come to no other conclusion than that each of these blessings is perpetual in its bestowment.

VII. Unbeliever's Doom. There are seven specific and definite Scriptures which speak of punishment as being eternal. Christ assures us it is better for us to be maimed in this life, if any of our members should cause us to offend, rather than to offend and remain whole, and to be "*cast into everlasting fire*" (Matt. xviii. 8). When Christ is judging the living nations, the punishment that He metes out to those who have failed to do that which they ought to have done, is described as being "*eternal fire*" and "*eternal punishment*" (Matt. xxv. 41, 46). Christ says that those who sin against the Holy Ghost are in danger of "*eternal damnation*" (Mark iii. 29). When Christ is revealed from heaven, to take vengeance upon those who are ignorant of God, and who have been disobedient to the Gospel, it says that they shall be punished with "*everlasting*

destruction" (II. Thess. i. 9). One of the items which go to make up the "doctrine of Christ" is said to be "*eternal judgment*" (Heb. vi. 2); and the wicked angels who left their first estate are "*reserved in everlasting chains*" and Sodom and Gomorrah are said to suffer the vengeance of "*eternal fire*" (Jude 6. 7).

The question may be raised as to the nature of the punishment suggested, but that is not the question before us at present. The point which we wish to emphasize is the fact that, in each of the many Scriptures to which we have made reference, eternal means unending. We do not doubt this for one moment when the adjective is applied to God, to Christ and to the Holy Spirit. There never will be a time when God will cease to be. He who always was, ever will be. The same may be said of the Gospel and the blessings which God, in His grace, has given to the believer in Christ. Why, then, should a doubt be raised, unbelief imparted, when the same word is used to describe the perpetuity of the punishment of the wicked? Yea, we go further; we do not merely put it in the form of an interrogation, but we make the bold affirmation that no one has any *right* to say that *everlasting* does not mean *eternal*.

What, then, is the logical conclusion as we

think of the punishment of the wicked? As God will never cease to be, as Christ will ever be, as the Holy Spirit is eternal, as the Gospel is everlasting, and as the blessings of the believer are unending in their issue, and positive in their eternal life; so the punishment of the wicked, with awe let it be written, is unending, perpetual, and as lasting as God Himself.

How can men say that punishment is not eternal in the light of these Scriptures? We make a sevenfold indictment against all who so teach. (1) They deny the truth of the Bible, for it plainly speaks of "eternal judgment." (2) They libel the nature of God, for He is Light as well as Love. They who will not have the Son of His love to be their Saviour expose themselves to the judgment of the Son of Man, who will deal with them in righteousness. (3) They degrade the atonement of Christ, for He died that we might not perish; and if the fires of Gehenna could have fitted for the presence of God, what need was there for the atonement and the sacrifice of Calvary? (4) They despise the Spirit of God, for He in the testimony of the Gospel, urges men to flee from the wrath to come. (5) They give a license to sin; for only tell men that punishment is not eternal, and they will at once make

it a premium to sin. (6) They hinder the cause of Christ. The mission of Christ into this world was to make it possible for men to be saved, and the mission of those who go forth at His command is to bring men in contact with Him that they might be saved; but all this is useless if there was not something terrible and eternal from which men were to be delivered. (7) They join hands with Satan in deceiving the people; is it not a terrible thing for men to tell people that there is no such thing as eternal punishment, and then for those who have been deceived to wake up in the next world and find that it is awfully and terribly true?

DOES DEATH END ALL?

JOB asked the question long ago, "If a man die shall he live again?" (Job xiv. 14.) And men have been asking the question ever since. Many have assayed to answer the question and some have given a distinct negative in reply, and among them are the materialists and annihilationists.

The materialists say death ends all. "Their popular theory is that mind and matter are one, that man has no soul, and that when he dies there is an end of him; therefore there is no such thing as mind controlling matter, but that it is simply matter controlling itself." Fyfe has well summed up the theory, "The materialists of our day, who deny that men have souls, assert that the cell—the protoplasm as they call it—the basis of physical life, evolves from itself the whole nature of man, and sufficiently accounts for all the phenomena of humanity, without the supposition of a soul. That must be a wonderful cell! Other scientists, however, with as keen an insight and as true a philosophy, affirm that it is the soul that makes use of the protoplasm—direct-

ing, controlling and differentiating all its operations—to build up a house worthy of itself to dwell in; an organ by which it may work its way in the world. The soul of man is the organizer, not the result of organization; the weaver, not the web; the harper, not the harmony that issues from the harp."

Whichever way we look at it we feel inclined to say with the negro preacher that "that protoplasm is mighty wonderful stuff!" for, according to the materialist's theory, the cell of which they speak so much, is the originator of everything as we see it, and after operating for a time works itself out.

The annihilationists, that is, the extreme section of them, say that death is a cessation of being. They tell us that man in his innocence was immortal, that he lost his immortality by sin, and that only those who believe in Christ have eternal life, and all those who do not receive Christ will cease to be. There is a section of the annihilationists who tell us that the sinner will be raised at the judgment, and that the condemnation that he will receive will be the outer darkness of non-existence. In support of their theory they tell us that Christ is the only one who hath immortality. We are prepared to admit this, and we think it alto-

gether wrong and unscriptural to speak of the natural man as being immortal. But we join issue at once when we are told that man lost his immortality by sin. *Man could never lose what he did not possess.* If he had been immortal it would have been impossible for him to have fallen.

God, in the justice of His mercy, when He banished our first parents from the Garden, barred the way to the tree of life by means of the cherubim and the flaming sword, and the reason He gives for doing this is lest man should "put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever," which, if he had done, he would have been in a state from which it would have been impossible to have redeemed him.

I know I shall be confronted by the annihilationists who tell me the word "perish" means cease to be. But I would remind him that the word "perish" does not necessarily mean annihilation. The prodigal when he was in the far country, said, "*I perish with hunger.*" The word "perish" is the same word as rendered "lost," which occurs again and again in the fifteenth chapter of Luke's gospel. The shepherd lost his sheep. The woman lost the piece of silver. When the prodigal came back the father

said, "This my son was lost, and is found." But the sheep was not non-existent. Nor was the piece of silver. Nor was the prodigal son. They were lost simply to the original intent for which they were made. Christ uses the word when He speaks of the new wine marring the skins into which it is put (Mark ii. 22). The skins were rendered useless as far as their original purpose was concerned, but the material was still there. So that the word "perish" does not necessarily mean annihilation.

I shall then be confronted by the word "destroy," and I shall be told that it must mean annihilation. We read that Christ's intent in dying was "That through death He might '*destroy*' him that had the power of death" (Heb. ii. 14). Is the devil annihilated? I wish he was. Christ did not cause him to cease to be, but He did render him powerless as far as his authority was concerned over the unseen world. The word "destroy" means to make of "none effect," or to "put down," and is so rendered in Romans iv. 14, I Cor: xv. 24.

There are three things that annihilationists confuse; first, that *death is not a cessation of being*. There is a death to which the Bible refers which is worse than a physical one, namely, a spiritual one. We read of the

woman who lives in pleasure, who "is dead while she lives." Christ said of the prodigal that he was dead as long as he was away from his father. And of the Church at Sardis He said that it had a name to live, but was dead. Death in every sense of the word simply means separation. When we speak of physical death the spirit is separated from the body. When we think of spiritual death man is separated by sin from God, and the second death is eternal separation from Him.

Second, *God made man in His own image.* "God is a Spirit." God cannot cease to be, and therefore, man must be parallel in his existence with Him. As God is an indestructible Spirit so man is indestructible too. Indestructibility and immortality are not one and the same thing. The confusion of these two words has been the cause of much mischief.

Third, *immortality is something beyond indestructibility.* The dictionary would tell us that immortality is deathlessness. But when we turn to the pages of the New Testament, we find that immortality is something more than this. It is a state of holiness and bliss from which it is impossible to fall. Remembering this, it is perfectly correct to speak of

Christ in His humanity as being the only one who hath immortality. Believers in Christ have got eternal life because they have Christ, for "he that hath the Son hath life." But they have not got immortality, for "this mortal shall put on immortality." It does not say *it has put on*, but *shall put on* immortality, and "this corruption shall put on incorruption."

Let us look at the question in a broad manner from a threefold standpoint; first instinctively it is *possible* that death does not end all; second, morally, it is *probable* that death does not end all, and third, Scripturally it is *certain* that death does not end all.

I. *Instinctively*, it is *possible*, that death does not end all.

On one occasion a certain great astronomer, while studying the movements of a certain planet, could not help observing that it seemed to be influenced by an unseen body, which he could not discern by means of the telescope he was using. But when a more powerful telescope was used he found his intuition was perfectly correct and there was a planet which was influencing the other. There is often something very similar with us. There is an attractive force which we call instinct, or intui-

tion, which unmistakably repudiates the thought of death ending all. It is a fact in nature that God never makes a mouth without giving it something to eat. And may we not say that He never implants a longing within a human heart without meeting that desire? "Philosophy shows that the life to come is possible. Natural philosophy tells us that simple bodies and elementary substances cannot be destroyed. The soul, it is said, is a simple substance, immaterial, indivisible, and therefore indestructible. Death may change, it cannot destroy." Bishop Butler gives this argument in another form. "We do not know what death is. We see its effect in the dissolution of skin and bone and muscle, but we do not know that it has any effect on the living being we call ourselves. It may have no effect whatever on our living powers. It may not only not destroy them, but may not even suspend their active exercise, so that for anything we can tell, death may be but the gateway through which all must pass into another sphere."

Let me repeat that the most casual observer of nature must see that God never implants an instinct without meeting it and satisfying its longing. Dr. Joseph Cook

has well said, "That God is, we know with a certainty based on the inconceivability of the contrary, and on the profoundist instincts of the soul. How shall the testimony of the natural consciousness become that of the regenerative consciousness? A fledgling robin sits in its nest and has not yet tried its wings. If this bird were capable of reasoning, it might say that it knows intuitively that there is air around it. But intuition does not point out the certainty that the air will bear up its wings. Instinct impels the bird to try its wings. And instinct is not created to be mocked. The instinct impelling the bird to leave the nest is really a scientific promise that the air will bear up the poor fledgling. There is no direct intuition in the case. But there is a native belief, a constitutioned conviction. It is in this instinct, that the faith that the air will bear up the bird, has its origin. The bird might argue to prove the existence of air. It does not. It trusts its instinct." The same may be said of the intuition which more or less is in every man. There is the inbred consciousness that there is a life to come. It is this thought that fills the sinner with fear in the hour of death, for the com-

ing judgment is that which he fears to meet in the hereafter.

It matters not where we go we shall find that this instinct in man, namely, a belief in the life to come, is general. If we go to the South Sea islands or to "Greenland's icy mountains," we shall find this belief. It is not longing born of genius and poetry, not the antidote to comfort the bereaved as some affirm, but it is a desire born of God. This beautiful instinct of human nature, the oneness of the family, living and dead, that led the families of the old world to meet in the tombs for fellowship and worship, has been enshrined in some of our finest poetry. Wordsworth has given voice to it in his touching ballad, "We are seven."

"Sisters and brothers, little maid,
How many may you be?"
"How many? seven in all," she said,
And wondering looked at me.

"And where are they? I pray you tell,"
She answered, "seven are we,
And two of us at Conway dwell,
And two are gone to sea."

"Two of us in the churchyard lie,
My sister and my brother,
And in the churchyard cottage I
Dwell near them with my mother."

“How many are you, then,” said I,
“If they two are in heaven?”
The little maiden did reply,
“Oh, master, we are seven.”

It did not occur to her for one moment because two were gone but what they were still.

When we turn to the faith of believers as to a future life the natural instinct takes a more decided form and bears the impress of the living God. Let me give you a few testimonies.

Tennyson, in his inimitable way, voices his confidence, in those matchless words, when he says:—

“That nothing walks with aimless feet;
That not one life shall be destroyed,
Or cast as rubbish to the void,
When God hath made the pile complete;
That not a worm is cloven in vain;
That not a moth with vain desire
Is shrivelled in a fruitless fire.”

The epitaph on the tombstone of Fox, the man of martyr fame, has the same buoyancy of hope. It says, “The life of the mortal life is the hope of the life that is immortal.”

Sir William Dawson, the great scientist, bears a similar testimony, in speaking of in-

uition, "Is it not a God-given feature of our spiritual nature, yearning after a lost immortality, and clinging to the hope of a better being in a future state, and is it not after all inseparable from a belief in a God whose children we are and who can transfer us from this lower sphere to better mansions in the heavenly home?"

Milton affirms:—

"The spirit of man,
Which God inspired, cannot together perish,
With corporal clod."

Campbell sings:—

"Cold in the dust this perish'd heart may lie,
But that which warmed it once shall never die."

Montgomery follows in a similar strain:—

"The sun is but a spark of fire,
A transient meteor in the sky;
The soul, immortal as its Sire,
Shall never die."

Davies says:—

"Hence springs that universal strong desire
Which all men have of immortality:
Not some few spirits unto this thought aspire,
But all men's minds in this united be."

"If then, all souls both good and bad do teach,
With general voice, that souls can never die,
'Tis not man's flattering gloss but nature's speech
Which, like God's oracles, can never lie."

Addison bears a like testimony:—

"Why shrinks the soul
Back on herself, and startles at destruction?
'Tis the divinity that stirs within us,
'Tis heaven itself that points to a hereafter,
And intimates eternity to man."

Again we repeat these intuitions as expressed by these men of God cannot be mistaken and will not be disappointed.

There is one other thing we must never forget, that the worker is more lasting than his work. At the funeral of George Eliot in Highgate Cemetery in 1880, a company of literary persons, mostly agnostics who had sought to argue God out of the world He had made, yet with bared heads listened to these words: "As the noblest lives are the truest, so are the loftiest faiths, it would be strange that she should have created mortal beings, and yet be no more than mortal herself. It would be strange if names and influences were immortal, and not the souls which gave them immortality. No; the love and grief at parting are prophecies; and clinging memories are a pledge

of a better life to come. So then we may take home the words of Christ, 'Let not your heart be troubled.' Great and dear friend, we bid thee farewell, but only for a little while, till death shall come again and unite forever those whom he hath separated for a time." Strange words these to be offered over the grave of the author of "The Legend of Jubal," and in the hearing of that broad circle of agnostic writers, men of thought, scientists, artists, poets and novelists of whom it is said, as they listened to the words, "they were deeply moved." Was not their feelings a proof that human instincts are deeper and truer than any theory whatsoever? Yes, as it has been well said:—

"Beyond this flight of time,
Beyond this vale of death,
There surely is some blessed clime
Where life is not a breath.
Nor life's affections transient fire,
Whose sparks fly upward and expire."

II. *Morally*, it is *probable*, that death does not end all. It needs a life beyond to explain and complete the present life. Otherwise it is an unsolved riddle. This world is full of incomplete work, broken prom-

ises, unsolved mysteries, unexplained anomalies, unrighted wrongs, unrewarded virtue and unpunished vice. Many a saint of God has quietly plodded on in this life, whose patient labor, unselfish conduct and consistent life have never been recognized nor appreciated. There has been one long stern and continuous fight amid trying circumstances, although the heroic faith has enabled that one to perseveringly keep on. The one thing that enabled the early Christians to take joyfully the spoiling of their goods was the fact that they had in heaven "a more enduring substance." The power that enabled Abraham to be a pilgrim and a stranger on the earth was the faith's vision which enabled him to look for a "city whose builder and maker is God." And the early Christians gladly met a martyr's fate because of the crown of life which was before them.

Not only do we find virtue unrewarded in this life in many cases, although virtue always brings its own reward, but we often find that vice goes unpunished. David could not understand why the wicked should flourish like a green bay tree until he went into the house of God. Then he learnt there was a hereafter in which things

would be adjusted. "I shall meet him in hell and there will be able to torment him forever," said a young girl who had been wronged, as she looked at the dead form of the man who had blasted her life. She but expressed what the Word of God states, "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap." Wickedness can now lift up its head with blatant and defiant impudence, but there is a day coming when the wicked will have to give an account to Him who judgeth righteous judgment.

The character of God needs a future life to vindicate it. Life is full of mystery and many of its problems cannot be explained as we look at them from the outside, although the man of faith is quite content to trust the Lord, for we know we cannot judge of the goodness of God by His providence, the unseen by the seen, and the eternal by the present. We know that God by the very necessity of His nature must be love, but very often as we look at things they seem to be hard, and cold, and unresponsive; still our confidence is, that some day we shall understand and see God's pattern in full, and prove that in every detail "all things" have "worked together for good to them that love God."

III. Scripturally, it is *certain* that death does not end all. Again and again in the life and ministry of Christ we find that He refers to the life beyond. When the Sadducees came to Him questioning as to which of the seven men would claim the woman in the resurrection who had seven husbands, He replied, "In the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels in heaven." When Christ spoke to the woman of Samaria He said that the water that He would give her would be in her "a well of water springing up into everlasting life." Christ's parting words to His disciples were: "If I go away I will come again and receive you unto Myself, that where I am there ye may be also. If it were not so I would have told you." How suggestive and yet how consoling are those words, "If it were not so I would have told you." He who was the Truth could not and would not lead His disciples to a wrong conclusion. His "If it were not so" surely settles the question beyond all dispute, for He plainly indicates that there is a life beyond the present. The reply of Christ to the Sadducees, His statement to the woman of Samaria and His parting promise to

His disciples tell us without a doubt that death does not end all.

Then if we think of the many expressions that are used to sum up the life that is to come; we read of an "eternal inheritance" which is incorruptible in its character, undefiled in its nature and unfading in its endurance. We are told of an eternal life, which in its manifestation will be realized and ushered in, in the day of Christ's return, and which means eternal union with Himself. We are also told of that state, which is described in the word "immortality," when we shall be what we would be, and be forever in a state from which it will be impossible to fall. We also have an eternal kingdom, which speaks of an endless rule and of a reigning power with Christ Himself. And last, but not least, the one sentence which sums up the felicity of the redeemed is that we are assured that we shall be "for ever with the Lord."

Christ tells us that "By their fruits ye shall know them," and it seems to me that the teaching of conditional immortality, being immoral in its tendency, is immoral in itself. If men believed that death ended all they would say, "We will live as we like, for death ends all." What is it that fills the

sinner with consternation in the hour of death? Is it not the fact that there is a judgment to come? Many and many a time I have stood by the deathbed of those who have been passing away without Christ, without hope and without God, and the one thing that has pressed upon the person who has been going into the unseen has been the thought that he would be judged.

I remember some years ago a friend of mine was conducting a mission in the west of England and after one of the meetings he was asked to go and speak to a woman who was dying. He spoke to her, but all he could get from her was, "Dark, dark, dark." He spoke to her of the blood-washed throng who stand before the throne of God, and who are there, because they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. He repeated again and again the fact that they had washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb and told her that He who had washed them in the blood of the Lamb would wash her too. The words seemed to make no impression. For some little time she kept muttering, "Dark, dark, dark." But at last she stopped her monotonous cry and after a brief space of silence began to say, "Washed—

blood—Lamb.” She repeated the words again and again, plainly indicating that her faith had laid hold of the fact that the Saviour could make her fit through the blood of His atonement, for His presence. Her last words, as she quietly passed away, were “Washed—blood—Lamb.” It is the blood of Christ’s atoning death that alone can fit us for the presence of God. His death is our life. His cross is our blessing. His shame is our glory. His sufferings procure our salvation. His forsaking means our welcome. His cry, “I thirst,” saves us from ever crying for a drop of water in hell to cool our parched tongue.

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

It becomes us, in approaching a question of such solemn importance as the above, to approach it in the spirit of Moses, when he was before the burning bush, and was commanded to put the shoes from off his feet, for the place where he stood was holy ground. The garb of idle curiosity and the shoes of speculation must be laid aside as we draw near to the burning bush of God's Word, as He, in His grace, speaks to us therefrom.

The question before us naturally divides itself into two, namely, Where are the Blessed Dead? and, Where are the Wicked Dead?

I. Where are the Blessed Dead?

There are certain terms and words, which are used in the Bible, which need to be understood before we can come to any conclusion upon the subject before us.

The words to which I refer, are "Sheol" in the Old Testament, and "Hades" and "Paradise" in the New Testament. "Sheol" occurs sixty-five times. Thirty-one times it is rendered "Grave," thirty-one times it is translated "Hell," and three times "Pit." The Greek word "Hades," which is the corresponding expression to the Hebrew word "Sheol," occurs

eleven times, ten times translated "Hell," and once "Grave." "Paradise" is mentioned three times. "Sheol" and "Hades" simply mean "the unseen world"; and "Paradise" signifies the abode of the blessed, the pleasure garden of the saints, as the word indicates.

There are several questions that naturally arise, such as, Is Sheol a place? If so, where is it? Are Sheol and the Grave identical? Did the Old Testament believers go to Sheol? Did Christ go to Sheol or Hades? Do believers go to Hades now? I shall endeavor to answer these questions in detail.

Is Sheol or Hades a place? Yes. This may be gathered from the etymology of the word, as Gesenius says: "The true etymology of the word seems to be that Sheol is put for Sheyol—a cavity, *a hollow subterranean place*—just as the German word *holle*, hell, is the same originally with *höhle*—a hollow cavern; and the Latin, *Cœlum*, heaven, is from the Greek, *Koilos*, a hollow." Again, that Sheol is a place is clear from the use of the term "Hades." It is said to have "*gates*" (Matt. xvi. 18); Christ said He would thrust Capernaum down to it (Matt. xi. 23); the rich man is seen in it (Luke xvi. 23); Christ was not left in it (Acts ii. 27, 31); and He now possesses the keys of it (Rev. i. 18). The reason why I refer to this

is, because some affirm that Hades simply represents a *state*—the unconscious state of those who have departed this life. That Hades has locality will be gathered from the next answer.

Where is Sheol or Hades? In the heart of the earth. I give, what I believe to be the answer, in a sentence, and now proceed to present the Biblical proof. No less than thirty times is “Sheol” located downwards, as the following list of passages will show:—

Gen. xxxvii. 35 (R.V.M.)—“I will go *down* to Sheol to my son mourning.”

Gen. xlvi. 38 (R.V.M.)—“Bring *down* my grey hairs with sorrow to Sheol.”

Gen. xlvi. 29 (R.V.M.)—“Bring *down* my grey hairs with sorrow to Sheol.”

Gen. xlvi. 31 (R.V.M.)—“Bring *down* the grey hairs of thy servant, our father, with sorrow to Sheol.”

Num. xvi. 30 (R.V.M.)—They go *down* alive into Sheol.”

Num. xvi. 33 (R.V.M.)—“They and all that appertained to them went *down* alive into Sheol.”

Deut. xxxii. 22 (R.V.M.)—“A fire is kindled in mine anger and burneth unto the *lowest* Sheol.”

I. Sam. ii. 6 (R.V.M.)—The Lord bringeth *down* to Sheol.”

I. Kings ii. 6 (R.V.M.)—Let not his hoar head go *down* to Sheol in peace.”

I. Kings ii. 9 (R.V.M.)—“Thou shalt bring this hoar head *down* to Sheol with blood.”

Job vii. 9 (R.V.)—“He that goeth *down* to Sheol shall come up no more.”

Job xi. 8 (R.V.)—“It is *deeper* than Sheol, what canst thou know.”

Job xvii. 16 (R.V.)—“It shall go *down* to the bars of Sheol.”

Job xxi. 13 (R.V.)—"In a moment they go *down* to Sheol."

Ps. xxx. 3 (R.V.)—"Thou hast *brought up* my soul from Sheol."

Ps. lv. 15 (R.V.M.)—"Let them go *down* alive into Sheol."

Ps. lxxxvi. 13 (R.V.M.)—"Thou hast delivered from Sheol *beneath*."

Ps. cxxxix. 8 (R.V.)—"If I ascend up into heaven thou art there; if I make my bed in Sheol thou art there."

Prov. ix. 18 (R.V.)—"Her guests are in the *depths* of Sheol."

Prov. xv. 24 (R.V.)—"That he may depart from Sheol *beneath*."

Isa. v. 14 (R.V.M.)—"Sheol hath enlarged her desire, and opened her mouth without measure, and their glory, and their multitude, and their pomp, and he that rejoiceth among them *descend* into it."

Isa. xiv. 9 (R.V.M.)—"Sheol from *beneath* is moved for thee."

Isa. xiv. 11 (R.V.M.)—"Thy pomp is brought *down* to Sheol."

Isa. xiv. 15 (R.V.M.)—"Thou shalt be brought *down* to Sheol, to the uttermost part of the pit."

Ez. xxxi. 15 (R.V.M.)—"In the day when he went *down* to Sheol.

Ez. xxxi. 16 (R.V.M.)—"When I cast him *down* to Sheol, with them that descend into the pit."

Ez. xxxi. 17 (R.V.M.)—"They also went *down* into Sheol with him."

Ez. xxxii. 27 (R.V.M.)—"Who are gone *down* to Sheol with their weapons of war."

Amos ix. 2 (R.V.M.)—"Though they *dig* into Sheol."

Once the term is used in a moral sense, when we read of those who debased themselves unto Sheol (Is. lvii. 9., R.V.M.).

Besides this we have equivalent and signifi-

cant expressions. The spirit world is often referred to in terms synonymous with Sheol, with which they are used interchangeably, *e.g.*, "Nether parts of the earth"; Ez. xxvi. 20; xxxi. 14, 16, 18; xxxii. 18, 24.

"Lower parts of the earth"; Ps. lxiii. 9.

Over and above these Old Testament evidences we have Christ's own words, when He says, He was to be "three days and three nights *in the heart of the earth*" (Matt. xii. 40); and from Acts ii. 27, we know that He was in Hades. Is not the logical outcome this, since Christ was in Hades between His death and resurrection, and since He said that during that time He would be in the heart of the earth, therefore, Hades must be in the heart of the earth? Again, we have the distinct utterance of the Holy Spirit when He speaks of the ascension of Christ. He does so in contrast to Christ's descent into the lower parts of the earth in the following significant words:—"Now that He ascended, what is it but that He also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?" (Eph. iv. 9). Then, in Romans x. 6, 7, we read, that we have no need to ascend into heaven to bring Christ down, for He has already come, and we have no need to descend into the "abyss" (R.V.), for He has also ascended **from it**.

Are Sheol and the Grave Identical? No, they are not. An altogether different word is used, as we understand it, when the Grave is mentioned. The Revisers have recognized this, for in the introduction of the Revised Version they say,²⁴ "The Hebrew Sheol, which signifies the abode of departed spirits, and corresponds to the Greek Hades, or the under world, is variously rendered in the Authorized Version by 'grave,' 'pit' and 'hell.'" Of these renderings "hell," if it could be taken in its original sense as used in the Creeds, would be a fairly adequate equivalent for the Hebrew word; but it is so commonly understood of the place of torment that, to employ it frequently, would lead to inevitable misunderstanding. The Revisers, therefore, in the historical narratives, have left the rendering "the grave," or "the pit" in the text, with a marginal note "Heb. Sheol," to indicate that it does not signify "the place of burial;" while in the poetical writings they have put most commonly "Sheol" in the text, and "the grave" in the margin.²⁵ Two illustrations from the Old Testament will settle the question, if further proof is needed. When the brethren of Joseph brought the coat of Joseph to his father, he exclaimed, "It is my son's coat; an evil beast hath devoured him; Joseph is without doubt rent in pieces. And

Jacob rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his loins, and mourned for his son many days. And all his sons and all his daughters rose up to comfort him, but he refused to be comforted; and he said, For I will go down into the grave (Sheol) unto my son mourning. Thus his father wept for him" (Gen. xxxvii. 33-35). Jacob thought his son had been devoured by a wild beast; he could not, therefore, be thinking of him as being in a grave, when he supposed his body to be in the stomach of a wild beast. When Jacob spoke of the grave he meant the unseen world, as the Revisers have clearly indicated by putting "Sheol" in the margin, and as they say in their note on Gen. xxxvii. 35, "Sheol, the name of the abode of the dead, answering to the Greek Hades" (Acts ii. 27). When Samuel came up from Sheol to announce to King Saul his doom, he told him that he and his sons would be with him on the morrow. Now he could not mean the grave, for Saul's body was fastened to a wall in Bethshan, then taken down by the men of Jabesh, and with the bodies of his sons burned to ashes, and the ashes buried under a tree in Jabesh (I. Sam. xxviii. 19; xxxi. 10-13).

Did the Old Testament believers go to Sheol? Yes. Jacob lamented that he would go there to Joseph (Gen. xlvi. 38). Job prayed that he

might be there—"O, that thou wouldest hide me in Sheol" (Job xiv. 13, R.V.). The Psalmist rejoiced that he would not be left in it, and said God would redeem him from it (Ps. xvi. 10; xlix. 15). From Sheol Jonah prayed, while his body was in the sea-monster's belly (Jonah ii. 2, R.V.M.). Then from Christ's own words, in the incident of the rich man and Lazarus, we know that the righteous and wicked both went to Hades. Christ indicates that Hades is divided into two compartments, the abode of the righteous called "Abraham's bosom," and the place of the wicked, designated, "the place of torment" (Luke xvi. 22, 28, R.V.).

Did Christ go to Sheol or Hades? We are not left in any doubt as to Christ going to Hades, for it distinctly says in Acts ii. 27, 31, that He was not left there. The sentences, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in Hades"; "His soul was not left in Hades," plainly tell us that He was there, for a person can never be brought from a place where he has never been.

Do believers now go to Hades? No. There are many Scriptures that lead to this conclusion. (1) Christ said that the gates of Hades should not prevail against His Church (Matt. xvi. 18, R.V.). Peter had made confession as to the Christship of Jesus. The Christship of Jesus is the mighty rock upon which Christ

said He would build His Church, and of those who form His Church He said that the gates of Hades should never be able to prevail over them, as they did with Old Testament believers, and as they do now over those who are not in the Church. Christ has the keys of Hades, and surely He will never unlock those gates to let one of His redeemed in, in the light of such a statement as He has made. No, that can never be. (2) There is no doubt that Christ released the Old Testament believers from Hades when he ascended from there Himself, for He has delivered them who all their lifetime were subject to bondage through fear of death (Heb. ii. 15); and in speaking of Christ going into the lower parts of the earth, it says, "He led captivity captive," or, as the margin says, "He led a multitude of captives" (Eph. iv. 8). The illustration is taken from the conquering warrior returning from the warfare, and leading the prisoners he has taken at his chariot wheels, as an exhibition of his triumph over them. The usual explanation is, that the captives are Satan, death and sin. But Christ is said to put away sin by and at His death (Heb. ix. 26), and not at His ascension. Death is not conquered yet, for it is not till Christ comes that death will be swallowed up in victory (I. Cor. xv. 54). Satan is not cast into the lake of fire

yet (Rev. xx. 10), nor into the “abyss” (Rev. xx. 3, R.V.). The captives cannot be these. Are believers ever said to be led captive by Christ? Yes, in II. Cor. ii. 14. The Apostle, in speaking of Christ’s victory over him, and his being a trophy of His grace, says, “But thanks be unto God, which always leadeth us in triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest through us the savor of His knowledge in every place” (R.V.). As the Apostle was a living illustration of Christ’s victory over him; so when Christ ascended up on high, He took with Him all the Old Testament believers who had been in captivity; thus He led captive those who had been in captivity. As Pearson says, “The Fathers believed the name of Hades to belong to that general place which comprehended all the souls of men (as well those which died in the favor of God as those which departed in their sins). Some of them thought that Christ descended to that place of Hades where the souls of the faithful, from the death of righteous Abel to the death of Christ, were detained; and there dissolving all the power by which they were detained below, translated them into a far more glorious place, and estated them in a condition far more happy in the heavens above.” That this is the truth is also implied in Heb. xii. 23, where we who form

the Church are said to have come to “the spirits of just men made perfect.” It does not say that they are wholly perfected, that is, that they have their glorified bodies, but it does say that their *spirits* are perfect, that is, they are in the state of holy bliss. (3) Those of the redeemed who have left the body are said to be “in heaven.” Paul, in speaking of the “whole family” of “the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,” says they are “in heaven and on earth” (Eph. iii. 14). He could not have said that part of that family were “in heaven” if they were in Hades. Some have thought reference is made to angels in speaking of part of the family being in heaven, but as Hodge remarks, “The whole drift of the passage shows that it is not God in His relation as Creator, but God in His relation as a spiritual Father, who is here contemplated. He is addressed as the ‘Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,’ and therefore our Father. It is plain, therefore, that those who are here contemplated as children, are those who are by Jesus Christ brought into this relation to God; consequently, the word *patria* cannot include any but the subjects of redemption. The whole family in heaven, therefore, cannot mean the angels, but the redeemed already saved, and the family on earth the company of believers still living.”

The different expressions that are used to describe the intermediate state are suggestive. The intermediate state is an *unclothed state*. The difference between the intermediate state and the glorified is plainly distinguished in II. Cor. v. 1-4, where the former is called the “unclothed,” and the latter the “clothed.” In the one case it is a “naked” spirit, and the other a spirit clothed with a glorified body. From this it will be gathered, that to speak of those who have fallen asleep through Jesus as having harps in their hands and crowns upon their heads, is altogether erroneous, for how can naked spirits hold the harps when they have no hands, and how can they wear the crowns when they have no heads? It is impossible. The redeemed who are with Christ, and we in the body, both wait for Christ as the Savior to complete our redemption, that is, to give us glorified bodies (Phil. iii. 20, 21, R.V.; Rom. viii. 23; 1. John iii. 2).

The intermediate state is a *conscious state*. There are many who think that the believer who falls asleep is in a state of unconsciousness till the coming of Christ for His people. This cannot be “far better” than to remain here. As Dean Alford says, in speaking of the departed believer being with Christ: “This disproves the idea of the spirit passing at death into a

state of unconsciousness, from which it is to wake only at the great day of the resurrection. If it is to be with Christ, this cannot be. Christ is in no such state of unconsciousness ; He has entered into His rest, and is waiting till all things shall be put under His feet, and it would be a mere delusion to say of the blessed dead that they shall be with Christ, if they were to be virtually annihilated during this time that Christ is waiting for His kingdom." Besides, if the righteous are in an unconscious state, then all the righteous are in the same state, from Abel downwards ; but there is one Scripture which entirely disproves this. "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day : and he saw it, and was glad" (John viii. 56). When did Abraham see the day of Jesus ? Did he see it by anticipation, or was he actually beholding Jesus at the time that Jesus was speaking ?" I think if we take the marginal reading of the Revised Version it will help us. The text with it is, "Your father Abraham rejoiced that he should see My day ; and he saw it, and was glad." Mark the two-fold joy of Abraham. First, he rejoiced that he should see the day of Jesus ; and second, he saw it, and was glad. The first joy is the joy of *anticipation*, and the second is the joy of *realization*. He rejoiced in the days of his earthly pilgrimage

that he saw Jesus at the time He spoke of his joy. As Alford says, "Abraham saw in his Paradisical state of bliss. And his seeing of Christ's day was not *by revelation*, but *actual*—the seeing of a witness." And as Godet more fully remarks, "The relation between the word *to see*, and the past, *and he saw*, proves that this last term expresses the realization of the desire which had caused the patriarch to rejoice, the appearance of Jesus here below. The second aorist, passive, well expresses the calm joy of the sight, in contrast with the exultant joy of the expectation. Jesus, therefore, reveals here, as most of the interpreters acknowledge, a fact of the invisible world, of which He alone could have knowledge. As at the transfiguration, we see Moses and Elijah acquainted with the circumstances of the earthly life of Jesus, so Jesus declares that Abraham, the father of believers, is not a stranger in his abode of glory, to the fulfilment of the promises made to him—that he beheld the coming of the Messiah to the earth. No doubt, we know not in what form the events of this world can be rendered sensible to those who live in the bosom of God. Jesus simply affirms the fact." We have here proof positive that the redeemed who have left their bodies are in a state of consciousness, and not sleeping, as some affirm.

The intermediate state is a *blissful state*. When the dying thief asked Christ to remember him when He came into His kingdom, Christ replied, "Verily I say unto you to-day, thou shalt be with Me in Paradise" (Luke xxiii. 43). It will be noticed that I have punctuated the words of Christ differently from what they are in our Bibles, and make Christ promise the thief that he should be with Christ in Paradise, but not that day, although Christ gave him the assurance it should at that time. I am led to this conclusion from other Scriptures. Let me ask two questions before I give what I believe to be the mind of the Spirit on the matter. Where is Paradise? In II. Cor. xii. 4, we are told it is in the third heaven. Did Christ go there on the day He died? We have no information that He did. On the contrary, we have His own word that He was to be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth (Matt. xii. 40), that is, that He was in Hades (Acts ii. 27). I am inclined to think that Christ took the thief with Him to Hades, and that when He ascended to heaven, He took the thief with Him, and that the thief is now with Christ, with all the redeemed, in Paradise. That Paradise is a place of bliss may be gathered from the word itself. Paradise is the word that is used in the Septuagint to describe the

garden of Eden. It is a word that is used by the Greeks to describe a large pleasure garden with trees. The term only occurs three times in the New Testament (II. Cor. xii. 4; Rev. ii. 7; Luke xxiii. 43).

The intermediate state is a *blessed state*, for it is "to be with Christ," "At home with the Lord," and in the "far better" (Phil. i. 23; II. Cor. v. 8, R.V.). The presence of Christ was everything to the Apostle, hence, as he thought of what departing to be with Christ meant, death was a "gain" to him, for it but released him from the moorings of earth as a vessel is loosed from the dock. To be "with Christ" was "far better" than remaining on earth; yea, it was "very far better," as the Revised Version gives it; or as Rotherham renders it, "Far, far better." As Eadie says, "It was far better for him; far better for him to be with Christ, than to be away from Christ; far better to enjoy Christ than to preach Christ; far better to praise Him than to suffer for Him; far better to be in His presence in glory, than to be bound in a prison for Him in Rome."

What a different hope this is from what the Old Testament believers had! "They were gathered to their fathers" (Gen. xv. 15; xxv. 8, 9, 17; xxxv. 29). Ah! What a practical word this is! How many of those who profess to

be Christ's are filled with joy at the prospect of departing to be with Christ? Why is it? Is it not because the things of earth have such a hold upon the heart, and because the presence of Christ is so little known? For, after all, if we enjoy the presence of Christ here, it is but a change of place when He sends for us, and not a change of company.

II. Where are the Wicked Dead? The wicked dead are in Hades waiting the judgment of the Great White Throne, when they will be cast into the lake of fire. In the last five verses of the twentieth chapter of the Book of Revelation we have the whole scene depicted, and among other things we are told that "Hades delivered up the dead which were in it" (R.V.), and every one is judged according to his works. But, meantime, when the unsaved die they go to Hades. Christ Himself has drawn the curtain aside, so that we can look into the unseen, in Luke xvi., and while after His death and resurrection and ascension He made a difference in the state of the righteous after death, yet Dives is a picture of the state of the wicked dead now. We must remember that Christ describes what takes place in Hades (Luke xvi. 23, R.V.), and not what takes place in Gehenna—the eternal state—although, on the other hand, the former is a sample of the

latter. The rich man was not in Hades because he was a rich man, nor the poor man in Abraham's bosom because he was poor. *The rich man was a man who simply lived in the present, and lived for himself.* How many are doing the same! What a number, like Demas, love this present evil world! "Present gain is my ambition," says the covetous man, "I care not at what cost others sink, so long as I am benefited." "Present gratification is my desire," says the sensual man, "and I care not how many I cast upon the muck heap of the refuse of society, so long as my passion is supplied." "Present pleasure is my enjoyment," says the pleasure-lover; "all I want is to drink of the pleasures of the world." "Present applause is my honor," says the place-hunting man, who seeks for public office, because of the local status it gives. "Present self-complacency is my ideal," says the self-righteous man; "I believe in attending to the outward observance of things." "Present satisfaction is my one object in life," says the epicurean; "let us eat and drink and be merry, for to-morrow we die." "Present things are my occupation," says the earthly-minded man; "the seen is everything to me, and as for the hereafter, I do not want to think about it." But I would say to one and

all, that there is one word that stands out on the horizon of your life and which will press itself upon your attention, whether you will or not, and that word is "hereafter."

There were two things at least that Dives had in Hades, and these were *memory* and *despair*.

There is *memory* in Hades. "Son, remember," is the word of Abraham to Dives. It was that gnawing worm of memory that ate into his soul and caused his anguish to be so intense. "Don't write there," said a newspaper boy to a foppish youth, whom, in the waiting room of a railway station, he saw about to scratch something with his diamond ring on a mirror that was hanging on the wall. "Why not?" "Because you can't rub it out." No, the sins once committed are written with a diamond point on the mirror of memory. Sins against self, sins against others, sins against God, and sins of omission can never be erased by human effort. There is only one thing that can blot them out, and that only in this life, and that is the precious blood of Christ. Without shedding of blood, and faith in Him who shed His blood, there is no remission of sins; but trusting in Christ, there is no omission as to God's act of grace in cancelling the sins, they are all gone and gone forever. When the soul

passes into the unseen state, with the life's sins upon the conscience, they will remain there for ever.

Despair is in Hades. Dives wishes for a drop of water to be brought to him, but he is informed that there is no passing from one side of the gulf to the other. There is no communication between the righteous and the unrighteous, in the sense of those who are in the place passing from the one to the other.

Is there any hope in Hades? None, as far as I can see. I look in vain for one gleam of hope in the Scriptures for the individual after he has left the body. Eternal despair looks in the face of those who depart this life Christless, for character is eternal. The transfer from Hades to the lake of fire (Rev. xx. 15) will fix the state of the soul, for the fires of Gehenna will burn the character into a fixedness of being, even as the pattern is burnt into the piece of china, after the design has been sketched upon it, by the hot furnace into which it is put. The fires of Gehenna never burn *out* the evil, they burn it *in*.

Is there hope now? Thank God, there is. God waits in the compassion of His heart, in the salvation of His grace, in the tenderness of His pity, and in the strength of His power, to bless those who believe in Christ. He will bless

those who will be blest. He will save those who look to Him in Christ. Christ waiteth to receive sinners. Shall He wait in vain? Shall He die in vain? Shall He plead in vain? If so, it will but make the despair more desperate in the ages to come. Oh! sinner, flee to Christ now, and you shall find the truth of those words of Christ—"Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth My word, and believeth Him that sent Me, hath eternal life, and cometh not into judgment, but hath passed out of death into life" (John v. 24, R.V.). And this is God's assurance that you shall never have your part in the lake of fire—that tasting of the second death (Rev. xxi. 8).

IS THE SOUL FORMLESS?

THE age in which we live is, to a very large extent, a materialistic one. Men say they do not believe in what they cannot see. I say, men *say* they do not believe in what they cannot see, because the facts are all against them. I could mention a dozen things which men cannot see, yet all of which they believe. We cannot see the *air*, but we know it exists. We cannot behold the *law of gravitation*, but we know that there is an attractive force which keeps things on the earth, and which keeps the earth revolving in its orbit. We cannot see our *heart*, but our own consciousness is proof positive that it is doing its work. We cannot see our brain, but that it performs its functions is self-evident, in that we have power to think. We cannot see the *electric current* as it runs along the wire, but the swiftly moving car demonstrates its existence. We cannot see that mysterious something we call "*life*," but no one is fool enough to declare there is no such thing as life, for if one were to do so, he would be thought a fit subject for a lunatic asylum. Therefore, to deny a thing that cannot be seen is the highest piece of folly, and proves that the denier is

wanting in common sense and logic. May we not say the same to those who deny the existence of the soul, because they have never seen one, as they say?

On the other hand, there are very hazy notions, among those who believe there is a soul, as to what the soul is, and whether it has form or not. It is generally supposed that the soul is a shapeless, formless, indefinable something. One has well described the general conception, or the want of conception:—"Nine-tenths of the religious world who profess, of course, to believe in the immortality of the soul, have no definite or thinkable conception of the soul as a substantial entity. If asked what they really mean by the soul, their answer would be utterly vague and unsatisfactory, as much so to themselves as to the inquirer. They would probably talk about that living, spiritual *principle* in man, which distinguishes him from the brute. If, however, you ask one of those believers in the immortality of the soul, what were his conceptions of a man as a corporeal, visible, and tangible being, he would be able to give a definite answer. There would be no vagueness or ambiguity in his expressions—no dreamy principle mixed up with his definition. Man would be described as an erect, substantial, intelligent being, of a certain form, and

possessing certain organs and parts through which the vital and spiritual principle of the soul manifested itself."

God has been pleased to give us two great books—the book of Nature, wherein are seen some of the works of His hands, and the book which we call the Bible, wherein we behold the wonders of His grace, and the revealing of His purpose.

I purpose viewing the subject suggested by the question before us from the outside view of analogy, as illustrated in Nature; and from the inside view of revelation, as stated in God's Word.

I. *The Voice of Nature.* Dr. McMillian says: "The physiologist who would master the science of biology must study and compare the dual forms—the animal as the vegetable, in which life presents itself in nature. And so the theologian who would seek to understand in some measure the deep things of God, must study the two-fold revelation that He has given to us—in His Word as written in the Bible, and in His Word as written in the hieroglyphics of Nature. And just as the physiologist, finding innumerable analogies of organization and function, on comparing the two parallel forms of organic life, is profoundly impressed with the unity of creation, so the theologian, in col-

lating the acted and the written revelations of God, finds most striking analogies at all points between them, and is convinced that all the great facts, laws and aims of the two dispensations are correlated, and work together for the same glorious end." Now for our points of analogy.

There is one fact clearly discernible in Nature, and that is, that it is made up of two elements—the seen and the unseen. We behold the beautiful leaves of the noble plant, their shape, their order, their color, their symmetry; we analyze the flowers, and mark their beauty, their exquisite petals, their varied colors, their charming odor, and we are led to ask, "What power has produced this odor, beauty and perfection?" and at once the reply is given, "Life." "What is life?" "It is that something which makes the plant what it is." "But I cannot see it," says the questioner, "and, therefore, I cannot believe in it." The reply comes at once, "Whether you see it or not does not alter the fact; all the plant is, and all it does, is owing to the unseen and mysterious force called life." The life, the unseen, is the main factor. Where there is no life, beauty and odor are absent. In like manner the unseen part of man is the real part. The outward man, as seen, is but the expression of the inner man, the un-

seen. The outward man perishes, not so the inner man; that abides. That which is seen is temporal, but that which is unseen is eternal and abiding, even as the life in the tree may change its form for the time being, but it reproduces itself in the seedling or bud.

Nothing can exist unless it be a substance of some kind. This is a fact that cannot be gainsaid by the most materialistic. For instance, the air, when it is quiescent, can neither be seen, felt, tasted, smelt, nor heard. Shall we say it does not exist? We dare not. For when the air is in motion it demonstrates its existence by the pressure upon our bodies, and the power it exerts. This is self-evident, as we can see in the swaying corn, the moving trees, the wafted smoke, the foaming waves, the sailing ships, and the overturned objects in the hurricane. We are bound, from the effects produced, not only to accept the fact that air is a substance, but that it is also a *substantial* substance, especially when we call to mind that it exerts a pressure equal to the weight of fifteen pounds to the square inch upon all bodies on the earth's surface.

Again, ponder that mysterious something we call the law of gravitation. We cannot see that power which draws everything to the earth, but we know it exists, for if a person

falls from a window he does not drop off into space, but is immediately drawn to the ground. Many a sceptic has said that there can be no such a thing as the soul, because they have never seen it; then upon that ground one might equally say there can be no such thing as gravitation, although the facts are most conclusive.

Wilford, in his *Problem of Life*, relates the following, and deducts the following conclusion from it: "The German laborer, who placed his bucket beneath a dripping rock to catch water, was astonished when he undertook to carry it; he could neither lift it nor stir it, with all the strength of his arm. Yet he saw nothing to cause such a result except the water the bucket contained. It could not have frozen to the ground, for it was a hot summer's day. Yet something held it down with unmovable but invisible power. The secret was soon revealed. The bucket was nearly full of quicksilver, which had dropped from the rock with the water. Had this quicksilver still remained invisible, after the covering of the water had been removed, and had it been unobservable by any other of the senses, or could the hand have passed through it without feeling it in the slightest degree, it would have been none the less a real substance so long as its effects were the same in holding the bucket to the earth.

We must, therefore, judge of the substantial or entitative nature of anything of which the mind can form a concept, not by its recognizable or unrecognizable qualities through the direct evidence of our senses, but by its demonstrable effects upon other and known substances under the exercise of our rational faculties in judging, analyzing, comparing, etc."

Upon this basis we may, therefore, conclude that since the soul demonstrates its existence by what it can perform it is a real substantiality.

Many things we cannot see are capable of taking shape. Every schoolboy knows that if he obtains a bottle of oxygen and a bottle of hydrogen—a double quantity of the latter—and allows them to combine, the result is that water is obtained. How was the water obtained? By the combination of the two gases, which are its constituents; thus the gases which could not be seen when they were separated, are manifest when they combine, as seen in the water produced. May we not apply this fact to man? for, as the water was none the less present when it was in its gaseous form, so the soul is none the less real because it cannot be seen. And as the gases were capable of taking form in the water produced, so the soul may be capable of being seen after it leaves the body, and, therefore, may have form.

II. *The Voice of Scripture.* The Voice of Nature is expressive enough as far as it goes, but on many subjects it is silent, and fails to lead us where the Scripture does. This fact has been well expressed by Letham in the following lines :

“Never have the works of Nature
Yet to mortal man reveal’d,
How his much offended Maker
May to him be reconciled.

Flower, nor tree, nor rock, nor mountain,
Never yet have show’d the way,
Ever told him of the fountain
That could wash his guilt away.

Man could never yet discover,
From the sky, the earth, the sea,
When his days on earth are over,
Where or what his state should be.

But the page of Inspiration
Casts a light upon the whole,
Bringing peace and consolation
To the never dying soul.”

The celestial beings, who have appeared to men, have always manifested themselves in human form, and as the angels are said to be “spirits,” and have form, and as the disembodied saints are spirits too, therefore we may conclude we have form as well when we leave

the body. We have the clear and explicit statement that there are “celestial bodies” in I. Cor. xv. 40; and, besides, we have the many recorded instances of angels appearing to men, and who are always said to have had human form. It was “three men” who came to Abraham (Gen. xviii. 2). According to Manoah’s wife’s statement to her husband about the angel who appeared, it was a man of God (Jud. xiii. 6) that she had seen. From these two instances alone it is clearly seen that the angelic appearances were not shadowy, unformable vagaries, but they were discernible, recognizable forms, and that those forms were after the pattern of man’s body. Therefore, it is an admissible, and a logical conclusion, that the term “spirit” is applied to angels (Heb. i. 7) as to man (I. Cor. ii. 11), that he is, when in an unclothed state, recognizable in that he is like them, having form and shape. Have we not positive proof of this in the case of Samuel, when he came out of the earth at the bidding of the witch of Endor? The witch was astonished that Samuel should come instead of the familiar spirit, and exclaimed, “The gods ascend out of the earth,” and immediately Saul asks, “What *form* is he of?” and she said, “An old man cometh up, and he is covered with a mantle,” and Saul perceived that it was Samuel

(I. Sam. xxviii. 14). It was not an indefinable something which the witch saw, but it was a form that could be discerned, as can be plainly gathered from the woman's minute description. There are four things she says about Samuel—(1) She saw him ascend from the earth; (2) she noted that he was human, namely, that he was a "*man*," and not a demon; (3) she recognized that he was an "*old man*"; (4) and that he was covered with a mantle. All these things are associated with form, and clearly indicate that what she saw was not a shapeless, visionary nothing, and goes to prove that the departed have form, and that the soul is not shapeless.

The body being clothed upon the soul, indicates that it is shaped upon it. The Apostle Paul, by the Holy Spirit, speaks of the body as the clothing of the man:—"We that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened; not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life" (II. Cor. v. 4). If the context is studied it will be noted that the apostle is speaking of the "*outward man*" (which is the body) perishing, but the "*inner man*" (which is the soul) being renewed day by day (II. Cor. iv. 16), and he then goes on to describe the body as the clothing. Clothing, we know, takes its shape from

the person who is clothed; therefore, in like manner, the body of a man takes its shape from his spirit. If this is the case, that the body of man is shaped upon the form of his spirit, then the soul has form, and all the senses that answer to the senses. The author of the *Problem of Life* has well put it, when he says, "Whenever we can grasp the thought that man is a dual being, possessing a double organism, the one structure being corporeal, visible, and tangible, the other incorporeal, invisible, and intangible, and when we further recognize the fact that man, through the aid of his senses, can really and truly extend his personal presence to a limited distance beyond that of his corporeal form, we can then conceive of an infinite personality who may exist upon His throne, in one part of the universe, and whose all-prevailing, substantial or entitative attributes, analogous to our senses, but infinitely surpassing them, may make Him literally omnipresent, causing His actual being to extend through all extent. This view of God and man gives the theist something in the former worthy of adoration, and something in himself worth trying to save, and upon which a sensible and satisfactory idea of immortality can be predicted. To suppose that the human soul is bodiless, formless, and organless, is a thought about as

unsatisfactory as to try to conceive of the immortality of a rubber balloon. How can an immortality be predicted of man worth hoping for, if the soul is not to see, hear, feel, taste, and smell? And if these powers, even in our most exalted conception of them, are to exist in an eternal state of man, then he must possess the essential organs by which such faculties are to be exercised and enjoyed; and this implies that the soul, which is so vaguely talked about as a principle destined to immortality, is in reality the *inner man*—the internal, incorporeal organism, as perfect in form as the exterior structure, and alone the entity which animates our physical body."

The subject is necessarily one on which we have to speak with hesitation. We know nothing, experimentally, as yet of the disembodied state. This want of experience might have made any treatment of the subject impossible, and in any case, must make us cautious. But the indications of nature, and the statements of Scripture, demand consideration, and they lead the inquiring, we think, to conclude that the soul is the man about whom the body has formed itself, and whose shape it reveals.

IS THERE A HELL?

A PREACHER, like a builder, must have a foundation upon which to work. Every true preacher of the Gospel has, for his foundation, the Word of God. Its utterance is final and conclusive, and in it, he has a sure foothold. To this Lamp of Truth I turn for an answer to the question before us. In the New Testament there are three words which are translated "Hell." First, "*Hades*," which signifies the unseen or under world, and which is described by the Lord in the sixteenth of Luke. Second, "*Tartarus*," which is the abode of the wicked angels (R.V.M. II. Peter ii. 4), where they are said to be "reserved in everlasting chains, under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day" (Jude 6). Third, "*Gehenna*," which is the lake of fire (Rev. xx. 14, 15). This word rendered "hell," occurs twelve times in the New Testament, and eleven times out of the twelve it is used by Christ Himself (Matt. v. 22, 29, 30; x. 28; xviii. 9; xxiii, 15, 33; Mark ix. 43, 45, 47; Luke xii. 5; Jas. iii. 6).

The word "*Gehenna*" is the Greek for the Hebrew "*Ghi Hinnom*," or Valley of Hinnom, On one side of Jerusalem there was a deep gorge called the "Valley of Hinnom," which was the place where the Moloch worship used

to be carried on; hence, the name Tophet, which means an abomination (Jer. vii. 31; xix. 6). The place was desecrated by Josiah (II. Kings xxiii. 10), and became the receptacle of the filth and offal of the city, and fires were kept continually burning to consume the refuse. This was the Jewish type of the place of the lost, and used by Christ as a symbol of the fate that awaits the unrepentant sinner, although on the other hand, the fact of a judgment-devouring-fire was known prior to the possible employment of Gehenna in this sense (Lev. x. 2).

From the above, it is a fair and legitimate inference and conclusion to say that hell is a

LOCALITY AND ACTUALITY.

In other words, the wicked will be punished for their sins, and there is a place in which they will be punished.

But we are not dependent upon the mere use of the word "hell" in the New Testament, as to a place, and as to the fact of punishment for sin. There are quite a host of collateral terms. There are at least fourteen different expressions employed. Let us note these briefly.

I. "OUTER DARKNESS."

Christ tells us that some who have had exceptional privileges by way of offer, shall be

“cast out into outer darkness” (Matthew viii. 12). Darkness is a symbol of ignorance, sin, and unbelief. Unbelievers have already *inward* darkness (Eph. iv. 18), in that they do not see their condition as separated from the life of God, and do not apprehend their need of Christ, but they are to experience the “*outer* darkness” of endless gloom, because they are separated from Him who is Light.

2. “WEEPING AND GNASHING OF TEETH.”

The figure which the Savior uses is expressive of intense anguish, impassioned rage, unutterable sorrow, bitterest remorse, terrible disappointment, and self-abhorrence. The language which is used in Matt. viii. 12, is most emphatic. It is “*the* weeping and *the* gnashing.” Bengel says, “Sorrow in this world is not *the* sorrow. Then even heroes shall weep who now would blush to shed a tear; shall weep in sorrow for the good they have lost, and the evil they have gained.”

3. “WORM DIETH NOT.” MARK IX. 48.

The allusion to the undying worm is a figure of an ever-accusing conscience. As the worm feeds upon the object it is devouring, so an accusing conscience will be forever gnawing the sinner’s mind and filling him with pain.

There is in the simile used, an "awfully vivid idea of an undying worm, everlastinglly consuming an unconsumable body." We cannot say all that Christ meant by the metaphor, but we are sure He did not employ it "to exaggerate His meaning, but only to express it," and that the one who experiences what it conveys "shall endure at once internal and external misery, as of decomposition and of burning."

4. "UNCONQUERABLE FIRE." MATT. III. 12.

There are two things which the Bible says cannot be quenched. One is love. "Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it" (S.S. viii. 7). The love of God is an unquenchable flame, which is fed with the oil of God's own nature, for He is love. Standing out in vivid contrast to this, like a lurid storm-cloud as the sun is sinking in the peaceful West, is the unquenchable fire of God's judgment, which is ever fed with the sin of the sinner. If our sin is not quenched in the atoning blood of Christ, which has its rise in the unquenchable love of God, then it must form the fuel of God's righteous ire, upon which it must ever feed.

5. "PERISH." JOHN III. 16.

As we often find the most dangerous places where the grandest sights are to be seen, so in

the grandest verse in the Bible we discover there one word which proclaims the terrible doom from which the believer in Christ has been rescued, and also tells out the fate which awaits those who die in their sins, and that word is "*Perish*." When the prodigal was in the far country among the swine troughs, he exclaimed, "I perish with hunger." Is not that a picture of the lost condition of those who pass into the unseen without having returned to the Father's house? A conscious and terrible hunger, which will never be satisfied. We are warranted in saying this, for the antithesis of the "never hunger" and "never thirst" of the believer's portion is "ever hunger" and "ever thirst."

6. "LOSE." MATT. XVI. 26.

Christ says, it is possible for a man to gain all he could wish in this life, and yet lose everything that is worth having in the life to come—yea, himself, too. The significance of the term "*Lose*" is most suggestive. It is rendered "*damage*" in II. Cor. vii. 9; "*be cast away*" in Luke ix. 25; and "*suffer loss*" in I. Cor. iii. 15. Does not this tell us what hell is, in one sense? It means to lose that which wholly and alone can make us happy, and to lose ourselves in that we shall not answer to

the end of our existence, namely, to glorify God. Better to count all loss for Christ as Paul did (Phil. iii. 7, 8), than to be damaged to our eternal loss, and to be cast away like a broken and useless vessel.

7. "WRATH ABIDETH." JOHN III. 36.

The telling force of the word "*meno*," rendered "*abideth*," is better seen if we note how Christ uses it in other places. He says, "Christ *abideth* forever" (John xii. 34). He speaks of that meat which "*endureth* (*meno*) unto eternal life" (John vi. 27). "The Father *dwelleth* (*meno*) with Me." "He *dwelleth* (*meno*) with you" (John xiv. 10, 17), says the Lord Jesus, in speaking of the continuous presence of the Father with Him, and the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit with the believer. "Your sin *remaineth*" (*meno*, John ix. 41), declared the Lord Jesus to the blinded Jews. All these uses of the word by Christ tell out with unmistakable emphasis the permanence of the wrath which abides upon those who will not believe in Christ.

8. "SHALL NOT SEE LIFE." JOHN III. 36.

The life, which is the "life indeed," shall not only never be possessed by the unbeliever, but he "shall not see" it even. Christ's repeat-

ed promise to His disciples was, "Ye shall *see* Me" (John xvi. 16, 17, 19, 22). As Christ appeared to His disciples, and shewed Himself to them, and they saw Him face to face (I. Cor. xv. 5, 8); so shall the believer see Him face to face, and be like Him (I. John iii. 2); but the unbeliever will never see Christ as the Life, nor experience all that term "life" signifies, for he has never known Him as such. To "see life" is to know Christ as such, as the word "*see*" in each of the above Scriptures signifies, for it means to see a person face to face. What a contrast is seen in the two following Scriptures: "They *see* His face"; "Every eye shall *see* Him" (Rev. xxii. 4; i. 7). In the former case it means to see Him as the Life and be blest; and in the latter case, to behold Him as the Judge, and be condemned.

9. "ETERNAL PUNISHMENT." MATT. XXV. 46.

The word "*kolasis*," rendered "*punishment*," only occurs in one other place, and that is in I. John iv. 18, where it is given "*torment*." "Fear hath *torment*." Some have tried to minimize the term by saying that it only means "*pruning*," but they forget that it is "*eternal*," whatever else it is. The emphasis must be put on the adjective, and the contrast suggested by the everlastingness of the bliss of the right-

eous, must also be pondered, for the “everlasting life” of the one runs parallel with the “everlasting punishment” of the other.

10. “DESTRUCTION.” PHIL. III. 19.

The “end” of the “enemies of the Cross of Christ is destruction.” There are some who affirm, that “destruction signifies annihilation,” hence the punishment means a cessation of being. The term means nothing of the sort, the word is rendered “*waste*” in Matthew xxvi. 8, in calling attention to the ointment that was put upon Christ, which was said to be “waste.” Surely, it cannot be said the ointment was annihilated, although it might be said to be wasted. Do we not say of a man who lives a useless, aimless life, that he is a waster? So those, whose end is destruction, are wasted as far as profit to themselves is concerned, and glory to God.

II. “TORMENT.” LUKE XVI. 28.

Dives speaks of the abode of the lost as a “place of *torment*,” and says, “I am *tormented* in this flame.” Abraham also reminds him, that while Lazarus is comforted, he is “*tormented*” (Luke xvi. 24, 25). It may be said “that Luke xvi. describes ‘Hades,’ and not ‘Gehenna.’” That is perfectly true, but the

former is a type of the latter, for the same terms are applied to both; hence we find "*torment*" spoken of in relation to the punishment of the wicked six times in the Book of the Revelation (Rev. xiv. 11; xviii. 7, 10, 15; xx. 10). The force and fullness of the words rendered "*torment*" may be gathered, when it is known that they mean to be tormented as with a disease, like the man who was sick of the palsy, of whom it is said he was grievously *tormented* (Matt. viii. 6); to be hard pressed, through violent labor, as the disciples were when they labored to bring the vessel to land, of whom it is said, they were "*toiling in rowing*" (Mark vi. 48); and the term also signifies to be vexed, as Lot was by the filthy conversation of the Sodomites, when it says, they " *vexed his righteous soul*" (II. Peter ii. 8).

12. "SECOND DEATH." REV. XX. 14.

Death, in whatever sense we use the word, means separation. Physical death is the separation of the individual from the body. Moral and spiritual death signify the separation of the soul from God; hence the prodigal is dead, as long as he is in the far country (Luke xv. 24); the woman who lives in pleasure is dead, as long as she continues in her life of sin (I. Tim. v. 6); and the church at Sardis is

dead, as long as it only has a name to live, and no communion with Christ (Rev. iii. 1). Hell is hell indeed to be eternally separated from God, the Source of happiness, peace, and holiness, for this signifies the participation in all that is not found in Him.

13. "STILL." REV. XXII. II.

The eternal state of the righteous is to be progressive in its upward trend in the path of holiness. The condition of the "unjust and filthy" is to be continuous in its downward course of iniquity. The impressiveness of the little word "still" in the above Scripture is enhanced when it is known that it is rendered sixteen times by the word "*more*," once by the word "*yet*," and once by the word "*longer*," in the Book of the Revelation. So that the sentence "filthy still," or "unjust still," might equally be translated "filthy more," "unjust yet," or "longer." The margin of the Revised Version brings this out; it says, "filthy *yet more*." The fact is, that if any one chooses and continues in a given course, his or her destiny is fixed, as Thackeray says, "Sow an action, reap a habit; sow a habit, reap a character; sow a character, and reap a destiny." Thus the sinner fixes his eternal state, and there must be eternal punishment, be-

cause there is eternal sin; as Hodge says, "The instant a soul sins it is cut off from the communion and life of God. As long as it continues in that state, it will continue to sin. As long as it continues to sin, it will continue to deserve His wrath and curse. It is obvious that the sinful tempers and conduct indulged in, in hell, will deserve and receive punishment as strictly as those previously indulged in, in this life."

14. "WRATH TO COME." I. THESS. I. 10.

The Bible speaks of the "wrath of God," as well as the "love of God" (Matt. iii. 7). The Lord Jesus used the expression (John iii. 36). We cannot tell all that it means, but Christ assures us that all unbelievers shall experience it, and that it will be eternal. Let me urge you, if you are not delivered from the wrath to come, to flee from it at once, by faith in the Savior's atonement. There is only one place of safety, and that is in Christ. As when the prairie is on fire, the traveler's safety is to fire the grass in front of him, and then stand where the fire has been, thus when the fire comes up it has nothing upon which to feed; hence the traveler is safe, because he stands where the fire has done its work; so the soul that rests on Christ's finished work, and hides in Him,

stands where the fire of God's judgment against sin has fed, and he is saved, and knows that "There is now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus," and hence he can sing,

"Death and judgment are behind me,
Grace and glory are before;
All the billows rolled o'er Jesus,
There exhausted all their power."

I. Man's conscience proclaims there is a hell. Shakespeare speaks of the "worm of conscience," which undoubtedly is taken from Christ's statement "where their worm dieth not." And the sage of Stratford in a striking manner illustrates this in this memorable representation which he gives of Macbeth's wife. Her guilty conscience is haunting her and disturbs her as she walks in her sleep and thinks she is washing her hands. The crime with which she was associated had stamped itself indelibly upon her mind and the blood marks are seen by her mental vision upon her hands, and she cries out in her anguish:—

"Out, d——d spot, I say,
Here's the smell of the blood still, all the perfumes of
Arabia
Will not sweeten this little hand. Oh! oh!! oh!!!"

There is something very pathetic and yet

awful in that exclamation, "Oh, Oh, Oh!" There is hell in it. The sins which men commit are the fuel which make and feed a hell. As the breath makes the indentation upon the wax cylinder as the speaker speaks into the phonograph which repeats the words thus given, so the actions of a man's life come back to him, and they are the very torture and fire of hell. When Charles the Ninth of France was importuned to kill Coligny, he for a long time refused to do so, publicly or privately, but at last he gave way and consented in these memorable words: "Assassinate Admiral Coligny, but leave not a Huguenot alive in France to reproach me." The consequence was the massacre of St. Bartholomew. The creation of our sins creates the conscience which accuses, and these create the hell.

II. The permanence of moral character affirms there is a hell. Thackeray has well said:—

"Sow a thought and you reap an act;
Sow an act and reap a habit;
Sow a habit and reap a character;
Sow a character and reap a destiny."

These things always follow. How forcible and strong habit is! It is like the word itself; you take away the "h" and you still have

“a bit.” You take away the “a,” it is “bit” still; and if you take away the “b” it is “it” still.

In thinking of the permanence of moral character there are certain things which lead up to the permanence:

1. Light received, but not obeyed, becomes unwelcome. “If the light in you become darkness, how great is that darkness.”

2. Truth being unwelcome, is soon ignored, as its presence gives pain; and error is welcome because it stultifies the conscience. How often have we seen it that when a man has gone over to error there has been a moral cause for his so doing.

3. Passions are curbed by truth, but when it is ignored, then the curb is removed and the reins of desire are thrown on the back of inclination.

4. The passions becoming stronger, the moral nature becomes weaker, even as the parasite ivy clinging to the splendid oak robs it of its vitality.

5. The outcome of the weakening of the moral fibre means that the power of resistance is destroyed, even as there is a point on Lake Erie where the current becomes too strong for the swimmer and he is carried on by the rapids to and over the dreaded Falls.

6. Ultimately the man becomes so weak that evil is his good and hell is his destiny, and he cannot rise, even if he would, and he would not if he could. Evil is his good and hell is his heaven.

Carlyle quotes out of the Koran a story of the dwellers by the Rea Sea to whom Moses was sent. They sniffed and sneered at Moses; saw no comeliness in him, and so he withdrew. But Nature and her rigorous veracities did not withdraw. When next we find the dwellers by the Red Sea, they, according to the Koran, are all changed into apes. By not using their souls they lost them. "And now," Carlyle says, "their only enjoyment is to sit there and look out into the smokiest, dreariest, most undecipherable sort of universe. Only once in seven days do they remember that they once had souls." Truth not obeyed and opportunity missed means irreparable loss. Let any of Nature's gifts be neglected instead of cultivated and barrenness and uselessness ensue, and further want of capacity to perform a given end.

The old Greek proverb says "that the avenging deities are shod with wool, but the wool grows on the eyelids that refuse the light," which is another way of saying that "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap."

III. The unsaved will be glad there is a hell.

There are three things essential to enjoy the heaven of God's presence, and these are condition, capacity, and conformity.

1. Condition. John Milton pictures Satan making evil as good and as yet retaining a free will, indicating that the condition in which he is found is the result of his own choice and he does not wish to have things other than they are. How true are the words of Julius Muller, "Such is the constitution of things that unwillingness to goodness may ripen into eternal voluntary opposition to it." The man who thus follows such a trend of things fixes his own destiny and proves the truth of the proverb, "As the tree falls so it lies." There is an eternal hell of punishment because there is an eternal sin to punish, as Hodge says, "The instant a soul sins it is cut off from the communion and life of God. As long as it continues in that state it will continue to sin. As long as it continues to sin, it will continue to deserve His wrath and curse. It is obvious that the sinful tempers and conduct indulged in hell will deserve and receive punishment as strictly as those previously indulged in in this life." Therefore the logical conclusion is that since the sinner cannot change his condition he cannot, therefore, come into the holy presence of God.

2. Capacity. Christ plainly teaches in His words to Nicodemus that life from above is essential for the life which is above. The ability to enter the kingdom of God is the capacity first inwrought by the Spirit of God. How can any one enjoy any given pursuit if they have no ability for it? Heaven is not only a place in which the highest felicity is found, but it is a capacity to enter into the surroundings of the place in which the person finds himself.

3. Conformity. "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord." The two-fold holiness is requisite, namely, holiness in Christ, which means a perfect standing before God, and holiness within, which means a new nature from God. Conformity specially emphasizes the latter; hence the new life imparted is to be developed by the power of the indwelling Spirit, so that Christ may be perfectly formed in us, for the secret of conformation is the Christ Himself. Confucius says heaven means principle. The Christian says heaven means Christ. And in its practical outcome conformation signifies likeness to Christ in His love in all the minuteness of His loveliness.

These three things plainly indicate what are the Gospel essentials and, thank God, with the Gospel supplies. The question may arise,

How can one escape from the hell of one's own doings and deservings? Bunyan well puts it in his description of Christian, in his repentance in turning his back upon the city of Destruction and in his faith in his making his way to the cross.

See Greenland's legend of montain with white and red side, Cook, p. 123.

IS THERE A DEVIL?

"And these are they by the wayside, where the Word is sown; but when they have heard, Satan cometh immediately, and taketh away the Word that was sown in their hearts" (Mark iv. 15).

THERE are three thoughts that lie upon the surface of these words. First of all we have unmistakably pointed out to us the *personality of Satan*—"Satan cometh." You cannot talk of a mere influence coming in the sense in which these words are used. Here is a person coming. In the second place, you will notice the *punctuality of the devil*. The devil is never behind time—"Satan cometh immediately." This word "immediately" is one of the key words of this gospel. Over forty times the Greek word occurs which is variously translated "straightway," "anon," "as soon as," "immediately." The Lord Jesus Christ when He touched the leper, "immediately" the leprosy left him, and Satan is as quick, for when the Word of God is sown in a heart, "Satan cometh immediately." The third thought that lies on the surface of these words is the *purpose of the devil*.

There are some people that aim at nothing, and they hit it; but it is not so with Satan. He has a purpose in all his actions. He comes immediately to take away the Word that was sown in the heart. The Word of God has life within it, and that Word would soon bring forth fruit if it were to remain in the heart, and so Satan's purpose is to get it out as soon as possible. I am not going to talk so much about the purpose of Satan or the punctuality of the devil, but I want to speak of his personality.

An old Highlander in the north of Scotland once made this very significant remark. He said, "There are two things which the Church of God has forgotten. They are the personality of the Holy Spirit, and the personality of the devil." We little know what the issues are to deny the personality of the one or the personality of the other. If you deny the personality of the Holy Spirit, you at once do away with the Scriptures, for there is no Spirit to inspire them. You do away with the Incarnation, for that Holy Humanity of Christ is said to be born of the Holy Ghost. Therefore you have no Scriptures, no Christ. You are in darkness itself. There are as far-reaching, if not far greater results, if you deny the personality of the devil. There are at least

seven results if you deny the personality of Satan.

1. The Bible account of the fall is untrue, therefore the Scriptures are invalid. They are not what they claim to be, inspired of God. One of the greatest things that Satan has succeeded in in these last days is this: he has persuaded ministers of the Gospel to believe that the account of the fall in the book of Genesis is a fable, is a myth. Satan has succeeded well when he can get any man to believe that.

2. Man is not incriminated in the fall of Adam for there is no Adam to be identified with, if the fall is a myth, and therefore we are not constituted sinners as the New Testament tells us by the sin of our first parents.

3. Following this, man has not got a depraved nature. He was not born in sin. He was not shapen in iniquity. There is no such thing as original sin, as moral depravity. Man has something good within him; it only needs to be cultivated.

4. If the fall is a myth, there is no need for the atonement of Christ, there is no need for the Saviour to come into the world.

5. The personality of Christ is gone, for

since He is seen in contrast with the great enemy of souls, if Satan is not, Christ is not. If Satan is not a person, Christ is not a Person. The logical conclusion of the account of the temptation in the wilderness is this: that there was no tempter to tempt and no tempted to be tempted.

6. The doctrine of future punishment is a myth. No devil, no sin; no sin, no atonement; no atonement, no hell, and therefore everybody will be saved.

7. God Himself does not exist is the legitimate result if you deny the personality of Satan, and you fall back upon the theory of evolution, upon blind force which causes things to be, although it is difficult to believe that things, as they are, could be without a creator.

One has well said in speaking of the purpose of Satan: "His chief aim is to hide his personality from man, and to get man to believe that the evil he works is the mere outcome of a certain amount of wrongness in human nature, or is the result of a certain want of balance between the good and evil in our spiritual being. And so, leading men on the false philosophy of the times, to doubt the existence of a personal devil, he is ready to set aside his own identity, if he

can thereby effectually lead men to doubt also the existence of a personal God."

Satan has succeeded well if he can only succeed in persuading us that he does not exist. I am quite certain that a certain band of brigands, away in some mountainous district, have accomplished their purpose well, if one of their number identifies himself with a party of tourists, and assures them that the mountain passes are all free from brigands, so they need not fear of being robbed. The tourists go on in blind confidence, and wake up too late when they find themselves surrounded by robbers, and they are depleted of all their store.

We can have no doubt as to the existence of Satan and his personality if we accept the teaching of the Word of God. I was looking some time ago at the number of names and titles which are given to the devil, and I was surprised to find how minutely the Spirit of God has described to us his character. It is well for us to know the character of our great enemy. The Lord does not want us to be ignorant of his devices. He wants us to be fully alert to what he is after. If we are only alive to his tactics, then we can meet him. If we know what the enemy is after, then we can meet him by a counter

move. The Lord wants us to be alive to his snares, to his wiles, and to his temptations. The following is an alphabetical list of some of the names and titles of the devil, and indicates his person and work. Study the devil, for he studies you. He is looking after you; therefore you look after him. Be on the alert, for he is on the alert.

APOLLYON

He is the god Apollyon. He is the destroyer, the one who goes forth at the head of his hellish band, for as the Lord is the Lord of hosts, so the devil is the devil of hosts. In the ninth chapter of Revelation we find him at the head of a great army. As Apollyon it is the purpose of Satan to destroy the bodies and souls of men.

BELIAL

He is not only Apollyon, but he is Belial. He is the wicked, worthless one, the one who instigates to licentiousness and is the one who is necessarily opposed to Christ, hence we read, "What concord hath Christ with Belial?"

CROOKED SERPENT

Satan is a crooked serpent. As a crooked serpent he is a deceiver who seeks to ac-

complish his purpose by his crooked, diabolical methods. There is nothing straight in him.

DEVIL

Satan is the devil, that is, the accuser. He accuses God to us, and tells us that God does not love us; and he accuses us to God and tells Him that we don't deserve to be His children for we are not faithful to our trust and calling. He is rightly named the devil, the accuser of the brethren.

ENEMY

He is the enemy. As the enemy he seeks to plant the tares of error among the wheat of God's truth, and to introduce the tares of the wicked one among God's children. He is ever seeking to mix up things. He has succeeded well if he can only mix his error with the truth; and the world with the Church.

FOWLER

As the fowler he seeks to entrap by the bait of worldly pleasure, and to ensnare by the wiles of his sophistry.

GOD OF THIS WORLD

He is the god of this world, the god of this evil age, and as such, he blinds the

minds of men with unbelief lest they should get to know the glorious character of God, and the light of the Gospel should stream into their hearts.

HINDERER

Satan is the hinderer, and as such he seeks to retard the servants of Christ in their work, in seeking to be a hindrance in connection with fellow believers. As the apostle puts it, "I was hindered from coming to you once and again." Paul often found that he was more hindered by brethren in the church than by the world outside of it.

IMPOSTOR

The devil is a great impostor and as such he transforms himself into an angel of light. Yes, he who is the power of darkness, hides his true character that he may get people to believe he is speaking the truth when he is telling lies.

JUGGLER

Satan is a juggler. He is called a deceiver for he hides his real purposes under his fair promises, and misrepresents things by his actions. He is all the time representing things to be what they are not.

KING

He is the king of the demons. He is called the prince of the demons and in Revelation ix. he is seen at the head of a hellish host which goes forth under his direction to work havoc among the sons of men.

LIAR

He is a liar. As a liar he is opposed to the truth and to Him who is the truth, and as a liar he is the father of lies from the beginning.

MURDERER

He is the murderer, as Christ tells us. As a murderer his aim is to lead men and women to perdition that they may, in their destruction, be deprived of the presence of the Lord and of the glory of His power.

NULLIFIER

As a nullifier Satan is always present when the Gospel is preached, that he may catch away the seed or else choke it by the cares and pleasures of this world, as is illustrated by the parable of the sower.

OPPONENT

He is the opponent of Christ, and he is the opponent of all those who are Christ's. The life of Christ illustrates Satan's opposition to Him and the experience of the Chris-

tian goes to show that our adversary is always dogging our steps.

PRINCE OF THE POWER OF THE AIR

As such he seeks to accomplish his purpose by bringing the elements to bear upon us. He is the author of many a storm. He has brought destruction more than once, as we find in the pages of Holy Scripture. We know that when Christ was asleep in the boat, how he tried to drown Him in causing that storm to rise. But Christ was more than a match for him, for you remember that when He stood up in His power, He "rebuked the wind and the waves." If His Father had sent that storm, He would not have rebuked that Father's action. But it was the prince of the power of the air who was acting.

QUESTIONER

He is the questioner of God's truth. Ever since he put the question to Eve, "Hath God said so?" he has been seeking to insert the same doubt, to inject the same poison. Christian, don't give place to the devil. Remember, that when he comes and suggests any doubt, that it is his poison he is injecting into your mind and don't you be poisoned by him.

ROARING LION

He is a roaring lion and as such is a great persecutor who seeks to devour all that are for Christ. He goes about seeking whom he may devour. I don't believe the devil can be in every place. He can only be in one place at a time, but he is pretty swift of foot and he has got a tremendous lot of agents. So that although he cannot go himself, he's always got a messenger to send, as in the case when the messenger of Satan brought to the apostle the thorn in the flesh.

SATAN

As Satan he is the great adversary, for every one of these names and titles represent what he is. He is the great adversary of God and men, and he ever seeks to resist both. He tries to hinder God working in us, and he tries to hinder us working for God, so you Christians who do not work for Christ have taken some of his soothing syrup. Wake up and go to work!

TEMPTER

He is the great tempter, and as the tempter he seeks to lure men by the obstacles he presents, so that the work of God is retarded.

UNCLEAN SPIRIT

As the unclean spirit he leaves the slime of his unholy nature in the soul so that man is poisoned by his presence and is prompted to do abominations and iniquities as you find illustrated in the case of Judas Iscariot.

VAUNTER

He is a vaunter. It was because he was puffed up with pride that he lost the splendid position that he once had. Have you ever noticed in the book of Ezekiel the detailed description given of what the devil was? I know it is hidden under the representation of the king of Tyre, but the king of Tyre was never the anointed cherub of God. The king of Tyre could never have walked in the midst of fire. The description which is given there of the king of Tyre can only be applied to the great enemy of our souls. He lost the splendid position he occupied through the pride that filled his heart. He wanted to be other than he was and he became the devil that he is.

WICKED

He is the wicked one, and as such he is the father and energizer of every wicked person,

and especially will he be the energizer of that wicked one he is going to bring up from the abyss, for as God raised His Son from the dead so the devil is going to raise his Antichrist from the dead. He is going to bring up a man that once lived on this earth to be the Antichrist, and that man is going to do marvelous things; he is going to bring down fire from heaven. Don't you think a great many people in New York would follow such an one, if he did such things? I think they would, and that is what the Antichrist will do by the power of the devil, and I don't wonder that the very elect will be deceived. If it should be in your time, dear friends, just look at his hands to see if there is the imprint of the nails. That will keep you right. That is the difference between God's Christ and the devil's.

X. Here is a striking thing. Would you believe it? There is no title or name that fits this letter. It may be a little fanciful, but there is something very significant to me in the fact that there is no name or title in connection with X. It is significant when we remember that X is the abbreviation for Christ, and as a numeral it stands for the number ten, which is one of the numbers of perfection which we find in God's Word. Hence

when God would give His perfect law, He gives it under ten commandments.

YOKE FELLOW

Satan is the yoke fellow. As such he seeks to get men to act in concert with himself, as he used Peter to try to keep Christ from the cross, and Christ had to say, "Get thee behind Me, Satan."

Satan is never nodding. He is always on the alert. We are told to be vigilant because our adversary the devil goeth about seeking whom he may devour. He is vigilant and you can only meet his vigilance by your vigilance and you can only overcome him by resisting him. How? "Steadfast in the faith," in the truth. If there is one thing the devil can't swallow, it is the Word of God. That is how Christ overcame the devil. So my advice to every Christian here is the advice of the old Scotchman when the young Christian came to him, and said he had been praying and he did not get the victory. He said, "Next time try him with a text, and you will find if you try him with a text that he will flee from you."

Thank God the death of Christ has conquered the power of the devil. You need not be afraid of the devil, Christian; keep on

resurrection ground and you get the victory. Not only can He overcome every temptation of Satan, but He can give *us* the victory again and again. In the second chapter of the epistles to the Colossians we read, "He has spoiled principalities and powers, making a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it." The more correct reading is "He hath stripped principalities and powers." Not only spoiled them, but stripped them; not only met them in conflict and overcome them, but taken away their armor, so that we have to do with the Victorious One, and in His victories we may be victorious too.

We understand what God says in His Word about Satan and we must come to this conclusion as we do so; he is a person. And now I want to make a proposition. It is a very simple one. For every effect, there must be a cause. Creation is the evidence of a creator. Dr. Cook once said: "The universe demonstrates that there cannot be thought without a thinker. The cause of the universe, therefore, is a thinker, and the thinker is a person." Another well-known writer has followed along the same lines: "The universe is a thought as well as a thing as fraught with design, it reveals

thought as well as force, and thought includes the richness of the forces and every law, as well as a combination of both. Those thoughts must include the whole universe. It follows then that the universe is controlled by a single thought, or the thought of an individual thinker." In other words, things as they are speak of a Creator. The watch proclaims the watchmaker, the suit of clothes proclaims the tailor, the chair upon which you are sitting proclaims the man who made it, the house in which we are met proclaims the builder who erected it. You cannot have an effect without a cause.

Again Christianity is the proof as to the existence of Christ. No one can for one moment deny the existence of Christ if they think of what Christianity is and what it has done. Saul of Tarsus and Paul are two extreme poles. Saul of Tarsus meets with Jesus Christ on His way to Damascus and He says, "I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest." That wrought a change in the heart and life of that persecutor of the church. As he himself says, "I was obedient to the heavenly vision." The consequence was he was turned from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, and the man who had been a persecutor

becomes a preacher, the man who had been a hinderer of the Gospel, becomes a helper, the man who had opposed Christ becomes His disciple. How can you account for it? It is the effect. What is the cause? Christ is the cause. You see an old briar in the woods and you take it and plant it in your garden, and you cut the head of it off, and you graft into that briar the bud of a beautiful rose, and you will find as you cultivate the rose and keep down the briar, the rose masters the briar, and the rose evidences itself and its mastering by the roses that are borne by that tree. And so as I think of the disciple of Jesus Christ, as I see a man who had once opposed Christ, coming out on the side of Christ, that conversion proclaims the Christ. By their fruit ye shall not only know them, but you shall know Him, too. The life He lives in us is a proof of the life He has, the life He is giving.

The same proposition is true with reference to evil. Creation proclaims a Creator, Christianity proclaims Christ. Evil proclaims the devil.

Do we not find there are demons on every hand, companies unnumbered, who are devastating and demoralizing society and damning souls? I wish I could give you

some facts which would be more pertinent in this country, but let me give you one or two which relate to England, and prove the statement.

If you go around Regent Circus in the city of London on any night after nine o'clock or even before, you will find that that district is simply swarming with prostitutes. There is a great army of prostitutes in England, the number some years ago was 145,000, and in the city of London alone there are 80,000 plying their hellish trade. My heart is often touched with pity and with compassion as I think of that army. I don't blame them so much, although they are personally responsible. I think of the prostitute man. The woman is socially damned, and the man gets off, but God does not lose sight of the seducer. "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap." Did you ever try to imagine what that means? Then we not only find the evil demon of immorality, but also the demon drink. You know it in this country, and we know it in England. Here is only one fact alone. Some few years back in England, no less than 135,000 people died of delirium tremens, and in the same year twenty-five people died of hydrophobia, and

because of the death of those twenty-five people, thousands of dogs were killed, and all those that were kept alive had to wear a muzzle. But the rum business and rum-sellers who caused the death of nearly 140,000 people were not only not imprisoned, but were authorized and protected to carry on their deadly work. What do you find in this country? I was down at St. Louis a little while ago, and in a certain district the law of prohibition is on the statute book, but according to the practice it is not in existence at all. The front door is closed, but the back door is open. Go to the Delmar Gardens, and what do you find there? Saloons wide open on a Sunday, when according to law, they ought to be shut. Some temperance people, who are always warming their toes by the fire and never getting the real facts, come over to England and talk to us about the blessings of prohibition. You smile, but there is a sad side to it. The fact of it is you will never convert the world by human laws. The only cure is the coming of Christ. I have met some very nice people sometimes, and they have talked to me about the world's getting better. They say as they read over the missionary reports, "Look at the progress of the Gospel.

Think of what is being done." Yes, we praise God for what is being done. We thank God for the Church Missionary Society in Uganda, and we say God bless Bishop Tucker and his noble band of workers. We thank God for what He is doing through the China Inland Mission and the American Missionary Societies. We see the wonders that God has done in Fiji through the Methodists. We see what has been accomplished in India through the Presbyterians, and what is being done in Madagascar through the Congregationalists, but with all that, what are the facts? Are we making progress? Well, here is one fact. According to reliable statistics the increase of population is 12,000,000 a year and the Christian Church is only overtaking one million of the twelve. I leave you to digest that fact. We are losing eleven millions every year. Where is the boasted progress? The fact of it is, we are not overtaking the increase in population, let alone making any progress.

Oh, as we think of the devilishness which abounds on every hand, we must agree with Dr. Parker, who in his own way once said, "You don't believe in the devil? Well, I would like to know where all the devilish-

ness comes from if there is no devil." It was a very pertinent remark. Whence come the blasphemous suggestions which flit through the mind and leave their slimy train behind them if there be no devil? Whence arises the desire to follow the wrong, which fascinates like a serpent's gaze its victim, if there be no devil? Whence is the desire to take some forbidden thing, which desire is felt to be begotten by a power outside of self, if there be no devil? Who gives the lighted match to be applied to the gunpowder of people's nature? Whence is it that men will continue in sin which they follow like the flittings of the will'o'wisp, although they know it is to their ruin, if there be no devil? Whence the blind infatuation that men will refuse Christ and think of Him as a hard taskmaster, if there be no devil to blind to the fact of His beauty?

"Men don't believe in the devil now,
As their fathers used to do,
They have opened the door of the broadest creed,
To let his majesty through;
The devil is voted not to be,
And of course, the devil's gone,
But simple people would like to know
Who carries his business on."

He is carrying it on. Oh, don't you believe that there is no devil! He is after the same work that he was after at the beginning. He is seeking to put doubt in our heart, and to have us say with him, "Hath God said so?" So don't parley with him. Treat him as Billy Bray treated him. The devil came to Billy one day and said, "Billy." "Yes," said Billy. Billy was digging up potatoes at the time. "Well, Billy, you say 'God is good.' He hasn't given you a very good crop of potatoes this year." "I'd like to know what you know about it," said Billy. "I know who you are, I know just what you are after. I'd like to know what you gave me when I was in your service. I hadn't got any potatoes at all then; I had an empty cupboard, and a miserable wife and poor children who were crying for bread. Don't you come to me with any of your lies telling me that my Father isn't good to me. I don't deserve such a crop of potatoes as I have got. My heavenly Father gives me more than I deserve. When I served you faithfully, you gave me no potatoes at all, and when I was not even faithful in my Master's service, He gave me a better crop than I deserved." And the devil went off pretty quick and hadn't even the manners

to say good morning. The devil was a very real person to Billy.

He was going home one dark night and some lads who knew him shouted, "Billy, the devil is in the hedges." "Praise the Lord," says he; "I didn't think he was so far off as that." He follows us up pretty close.

Billy once wanted to get a three-cornered cupboard and so went to an auction sale. He was such a simple fellow, never even having been to an auction, that he at once bid all the money he had. A publican who was present bid higher and of course got the cupboard. Billy was very much disappointed, for he was sure of getting that cupboard, because he had prayed to the Lord about it. Billy thought he would see where the cupboard went to anyway, and so followed the man who had obtained it, up the road. When they came to his house, the cupboard would not go in either the door, or the window, so Billy went up to the publican and said, "I will give you so much for it." "You can have it," said the man, and so Billy got the cupboard.

Do you know what the devil is after tonight? He is after you. He has got some of you. You say that is not very compli-

mentary preaching, but what's the use of calling a spade an agricultural implement? I read in my Bible that there are only two classes in this world,—the children of the devil and the children of God; those who are in Christ and those who are in the wicked one. If you are not in Christ, God says you are in the wicked one. It is not what I say. If you are not saved, you are lost. You are not free from condemnation, you are under it. If you are not being kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time, you are being kept by the power of the devil through unbelief unto damnation. But God does not want you to go into that place prepared for the devil; it was never prepared for you. God has made, in His love and grace, provision for your soul's salvation, ample provision, gracious provision, a provision that meets every part of your nature, spirit, soul and body. Oh, won't you be wooed by Christ to-night? You remember how on one occasion the devil moved David to number the children of Israel. That was all right, but the mistake he made was this: that he numbered the people of Israel without taking the ransom money. Whenever there was to be a census of the people,

according to Exodus xxx., every man had to pay one-half shekel ransom money. The devil is always trying to move people past the atonement of Jesus Christ, past the ransom of Christ, past the atonement He has made.

I remember standing in the city of Oxford on one occasion and looking at the top of Keble College, and I noticed the figures of a dragon and an angel, and the angel in front of the dragon was thrusting a cross down its throat. I thought what a beautiful symbol, what a striking image. The Cross of Jesus Christ is the power to overthrow the devil, to choke him, to overcome him.

Oh, don't you listen to his suggestions that Christ cannot save! He can save now, but remember, He saves now, He does not promise to save to-morrow. He does not promise to save next week. Let me say this, that the devil's clock is always too fast or else too slow. He eggs people on to a certain point and he says, "There's plenty of time yet," and then when he gets them farther on, he turns around and says, "It is too late, you have sinned away your time of grace." Don't believe him.

A friend of mine had been conducting a mission in this country and God had been

giving gracious blessing. Night after night people had been deciding for Christ, and my friend came to the last night of the mission. There had been a young lady during that mission who had been under deep conviction. The Spirit of God had spoken to her again and again, but she would not give in. There was something which was keeping her back, there was something which was keeping her from Christ. There was something she was unwilling to part with. As they were singing the closing hymn on the last night of the mission, my friend saw this young lady rise from her seat and walk out from the hall, and he had the impression from God to follow her; in fact, it was as though a voice said, "Follow her." He said, "Lord, I don't want to. I've spoken to her again and again, and it's no use. She's hardened." The voice came imperatively, "Follow her," and he followed her. There was a flight of steps that led up into the entrance of the hall, and as the servant of Christ got into the hall, he saw this young lady standing at the top step. It was a splendid moonlight night, and as he stood at the entrance of the porch, he heard this young lady pray in these words: "O God, Thou dost want to save me. Thy Spirit has been speaking

within me. The Lord Jesus Christ died that I might be saved. Thou hast done everything Thou couldst do in order that I might be blessed, but, Oh, God, Thou knowest I love the world, Thou knowest I love the pleasures of the world. Thou knowest I love the things of the world and I cannot, I will not give them up." And then she uttered one of the most awful prayers that ever escaped human lips. "Spirit of God, leave me alone, torment me no more. I choose the world, I refuse Christ. Spirit of God, leave me alone, torment me no more." A fortnight afterwards she was lying on her death bed, and what did she say? "God has answered my prayer. He has left me alone, and I am damned before I am dead."

Oh, dear friend, don't you play fast and loose with your soul. Decide for Christ to-night and you will never regret your choice, but

"If you still His call refuse
And all His wondrous love abuse,"

He will sadly turn from you, and you, too, will cry out if you don't mind, "Too late, too late!"

IS THE LORD'S COMING NEAR?

THERE are three or four passages of Scripture to which I would direct your attention. James v. 8, "Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh," or "Is at hand." Matt. xxiv. 32, "Now learn a parable of the fig tree. When his branch is yet tender and putteth forth leaves, ye know that the summer is nigh" (Luke xxi. 28). "When these things begin to come to pass, then look up and lift up your heads for your redemption draweth nigh." Joel ii. 1, "The day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand." Each of these four verses indicates to us the nearness of the Lord's approach. When nearing a large railroad depot, one cannot help noticing the lines from different directions converging to the center. The same thing is true as we travel along the great trunk lines of Holy Writ. Whichever of the three great lines of thought we may travel upon, with reference to our Lord's coming, we find they all land us in the great terminus of that event.

It would never do for us to confuse these

passages of Scripture, and think that they all apply to the same time of the great event. "The coming of the Lord draweth nigh." This sentence is associated with the Church of God. It reminds believers in this dispensation, that the Lord's return for them is near. The next thing for which we, as believers, are to look, is the personal return of Christ. We do not know when it will be, but it is near, as we may judge if we look at what is said in connection with the characteristics of the last days, for these characteristics are with us, and plainly tell us beyond all question that Christ's coming must be near.

Trees, in Scripture, are often found in connection with Israel, hence the reference to the fig tree putting forth its leaves is associated, not with Christ's return for the Church, but with Christ's return in connection with Israel. And I take it, in its setting, the passage in Luke's Gospel, "Lift up your heads for your redemption draweth nigh," has reference to Israel too. And then in the prophecy of Joel, from which I have read those words, "The day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand." You will find that these words refer, not to the church or to Israel, but to the nations, to the world at large. We are told in the New Testament to "give no offence, neither to the

Jew, nor to the Gentile, nor to the Church," and in studying the prophetic Scriptures, it is most important for us to place them under the right heading of these three parties. We must not take that which applies to the Gentiles and apply it to the church. We must "rightly divide the word of truth," and to rightly understand the prophetic Word, it is most essential that we should view the Lord's return in its proper relation in His coming for His people, and in His coming with them; to the place of Israel "when they shall look upon Him whom they have pierced," and when He shall, through Israel and by the Church, bless the world at large.

I want to look at the subject from three standpoints, starting from the Gentiles, then coming to Israel, and finally to the Church. We shall find as we travel on each of these lines we are converging to a certain point, plainly indicating that we are very near the event of the Lord's return.

I. The Lord's Coming from the Standpoint of the Gentiles.

We are told that "Jerusalem shall be trodden down till the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." The question naturally arises, "When did the times of the Gentiles begin?" The times of the Gentiles began with the reign of

the King of Babylon, King Nebuchadnezzar, and these times of the Gentiles which began then will run right on till the last head of the Roman empire appears, namely, in the coming of the anti-Christ.

There is another question which we do well to ask and answer. How are the times of the Gentiles represented to us in the pages of the Word of God? It would take me a whole evening to give you all the details of the two descriptions which God has given to us of the times of the Gentiles. If you will read at your leisure the second and seventh chapters of Daniel, you will find the times of the Gentiles depicted there in two different ways. The king of Babylon had a dream. He saw a beautiful image. Its head was of gold; its arms and breast were of silver; its belly and thigh parts were of brass; its legs were of iron, and its feet were of iron and clay. The man of the world sees a beautiful image, a colossal figure. The man of God has a dream, a vision of the same times of the Gentiles, but he does not see a beautiful figure. He sees four wild beasts. The first beast that he saw was a lion, the second a bear, the third a leopard, and the fourth was such a terrible beast he could not describe it. It had ten horns, and in the book of Revelation it has

not only ten horns, but seven heads. What a difference! The man of the world sees a beautiful image and the man of God sees four wild beasts! The different metals correspond to the different beasts. The head of gold corresponds to the lion, and represents the Babylonish kingdom. The breast and arms of silver, and the bear represent the Medo-Persian power which came after the Babylonish power and overthrew it. The belly and thigh parts of brass and the leopard represent the Grecian power which came after the Medo-Persian and overthrew that power. The legs of iron and the terrible beast represent the Roman Empire, which came after the Grecian Empire and overthrew it. Now, all these four great empires have appeared upon the scene and passed off. Where are we then in the point of history as to the times of the Gentiles? We must be somewhere in the feet. I don't know where exactly, but I think about the instep of the foot.

The Roman Empire is yet to be divided into ten kingdoms, as represented by the ten toes of the image, and as represented by the ten horns of the terrible beast. It is after the ten kingdoms of the earth, that the Lord Jesus Christ is seen coming as the Stone cut out of the mountain without hands to break in pieces

the image, and as the Ancient of Days to set up His kingdom on earth. As to the ten kingdoms, they must cover the old Roman territory. Some, if not all, of these ten kingdoms exist. Without saying which they are, it only needs the absorption of one or two smaller powers to make them ten. This is the point I want you to notice. Since we are so near the formation of the old Roman world into ten kingdoms, after which the Lord Jesus Christ is coming in person and power, you may judge how near His return is. His return with reference to the nations will be when He comes *with* His people, not when He comes *for* them. I don't know how many years there are to elapse between the two stages of His coming. Some think seven, others say forty years; it isn't for us to say. But since there is only a short period between Christ's coming for His people, and His coming with His people, when the times of the Gentiles will have run out, you may judge how near His coming for His people must be!

II. *The Coming of the Lord with Reference to Israel.*

Christ's return is near when we see how God's purposes are ripening in connection with His ancient people. God has not forgotten His promise, the promise which He

made long ago to Abraham, that his seed should possess the whole of the land of Palestine. They never possessed the whole of it. A very large portion of it came under the power of Solomon during his reign, but the promise given to Abraham in its totality has never been literally fulfilled. Then God's promise to David that there should be one of his seed to sit upon his throne forever is yet to be fulfilled. I know it has a partial application to Christ, but it has another application in reference to David, a prince who shall sit on a throne and reign over Israel. Whether David, which lived, or some one else, it is not for me to say, other than that he will be the viceroy of Jesus Christ.

God's ancient people are scattered because of their unbelief, because of their sin, because of their rejection of Christ. You remember what God said long ago to His people about their sins. *Leviticus xxvi. 18*, "And if ye will not yet for all this hearken unto Me, then I will punish you seven times more for your sins." *Leviticus xxvi. 24*, "I will punish you yet seven times for your sins." "*Leviticus xxvi. 28*, "And I, even I, will chasten you seven times for your sins." There is one thing, to always recognize in connection with Israel, and that is, that days, and times, and seasons

are always associated with that nation. The times and seasons have nothing to do with the Church. "Of the times and seasons," says Paul, writing to the Thessalonians, "I don't need to write unto you." He seems to say, "Your inheritance is a spiritual one, not an earthly. You are above, not on the earth." But Israel has to do with times and seasons. There are seventy weeks mentioned in Daniel which have a distinct reference to Israel. Sixty-nine weeks of years have been fulfilled, the seventieth week is yet to be fulfilled. That last week of Daniel's seventy weeks does not begin to run until the anti-Christ has entered into a covenant with the Jews. It seems to me that these seven times that are spoken of in Leviticus point to the period of Israel's punishment. God said that He would punish them seven times, and that they should be under His displeasure for that period of seven times. We need to remember that the days and weeks that are spoken of often indicate more than we understand by days and weeks. Let me give you one Scripture in proof of this. Numbers xiv. 34, "After the number of the days in which ye search the land, even forty days, each day for a year, shall ye bear your iniquities, even forty years, and ye shall know my breach of promise." Israel spied out the land for

forty days, and was punished forty years. Forty is always associated with trial and testing. God says, "I will give you forty years' punishment, a year for every day," which plainly indicates that God often takes a day to indicate a year. So I take it that these seven times indicate seven times of years; that is, taking the three hundred and sixty days as they were in the Jewish year. We have to look at these seven times as representing seven times three hundred and sixty. I take it that these seven times represent and are figurative of 2,520 years. Now when was it that the nation of Israel came specially under God's displeasure because of their sins and iniquities? Was it when the times of the Gentiles began? The seven times of Israel's punishment may begin from one of three points. With the capture of Jerusalem, or the departure of the Shekinah glory, or when the city and temple were destroyed. But suppose we start from each point. Jerusalem was captured about 606 B. C. (II. Chron. xxxvi. 7). The Shekinah glory departed about 594 B. C. (Ezek. viii. 11). The destruction of the city and temple took place 587 B. C. From whichever point we start, what is the result? Jerusalem was captured 606 B. C. Taking 606 from 2,500 years it leaves us 1,914. Take

the other standpoint, the departure of the Shekinah glory was about 594 B. C. Taking 594 from 2,520 we have 1,926. The destruction of the city and the temple took place about 587 B. C. Taking 587 from 2,520 we have 1,933. Whichever date you take, we find that the time of Israel's punishment, the end of God's displeasure in connection with them, is in 1914, 1926 or 1933. I recognize there is a difficulty here, that we have been reckoning the year according to the Jewish calendar, and that shortens the time a good deal. I have given to you these figures to indicate one point. I am not going to say that God's displeasure in connection with Israel ends in the year 1914, or 1926, or 1933. I only indicate to you that His coming must be near when you see the time of Israel's punishment is nearly run out, and that His displeasure has nearly exhausted itself. God does not forget His promises. "The gifts and callings of God are without repentance." God doesn't change His mind. When He states a thing, He will keep to it, and He has not forgotten the promise in connection with Israel.

It is a most interesting study to notice how very often God reiterates to Moses, to Abraham, to Joshua, each servant one after the other, that He has determined to give to Israel

the land that He promised. Israel failed to enter into the fulness of that promise, hence when we turn to Jeremiah and Ezekiel we find it repeated again and again, "I will gather you from the nations wherein ye have been scattered, and will bring you back again to your own land." God has promised Israel that they shall inhabit their land, and that they shall enjoy to the full the promise He gave to Abraham. And are there not indications which prove to us beyond all question that God is ripening His purposes. The great Zionist movement itself is proof positive that the Lord is indeed indicating that He has not forgotten His promise, and that Israel is surely going back to their own land in unbelief. Let me give you one or two facts in connection with the Jewish Colonial Trust. In the Zionist movement alone it is said that there are no less than 120,000 shareholders from all parts of the civilized world. And remember they are all Jews. Here are some very interesting facts from a very reliable source. Some two or three years ago over 60,000 Jews had returned to the Holy Land. Fifty years before that time there were only three hundred in Palestine. In Jerusalem alone to-day there are over 30,000, while there are over 60,000 in Palestine. Already every square

mile of Palestine has been surveyed and mapped out, schools and colleges have been established; already a Christian church is on Mount Sinai, while there is a Jewish mission in Palestine. The Rothschilds hold a mortgage on Palestine, and it is impossible for the tottering man of Turkey to pay his liability, and one of these days Rothschild will squeeze him. Nearly half the Jews of the whole world are in Russia and Germany, and these Gentile powers are not only anxious to expel them, but the Jews are anxious to get back to their own land. *The Jewish Chronicle* says that a large number of Jews in Russia have actually determined to go back to Palestine. It is the same with Roumania. *The Jewish Chronicle* makes this further statement: "Once more on the eve of the exodus, it wants no prophetic eye to see that Russia is on the eve of revolution. The time has arrived for Israel to depart, and by God's help may this be the final exodus of our nation."

And if we are simply looking at things from a human standpoint, I don't think any Christian would wish for war, we all deplore this wholesale slaughter in the East at the present time, and it makes us cry, "Lord Jesus, come." Apart from that, the sentiment is that Japan will win, but we are not supposed to say

that. I am not sure but that the reverses which Russia has been receiving are because of Russia's hard treatment of the Jew. It isn't the first time that God has used a little David to bring down a Goliath, and it is a principle that the people who touch the Jew get the very thing they bring upon the Jew. "We have got them tight now up against the Red Sea," said Pharaoh, "and we will drive them in and drown them." And he got drowned instead. "We will throw those Jews in the fiery furnace." And the men that threw them in were themselves burnt. Haman erected a gallows for Mordecai, but he got hanged upon the very erection he put up for the Jew.

This is the one thing I want you to notice, that all these things tell us the Lord is near. He is going to deliver His people. He is going to bring them into their land. He is going to reveal Himself to them. There is a day coming when "they shall look upon Him whom they have pierced, and they shall say: 'What are these wounds in Thy hands, and He shall answer, those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends.'" They will take the anti-Christ to begin with, but they will take the Christ to end with. Whenever you meet with a Jew, lift your hat to him,

for you owe a great deal to him—the Scriptures, the Saviour.

III. *Christ's Return is Near for we have With us To-day all the Features of the Last Times.*

I. Timothy iv. 1-3, "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly." This word *expressly* only occurs once in the New Testament, as if the Holy Ghost would call our special attention to what He is going to say. When the Holy Spirit speaks it is well for us to listen. But when He speaketh "expressly" we ought to pay special attention. "That in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils (spiritism), speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their conscience seared with a hot iron, forbidding to marry and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the faith." The first item which marks out the latter times, the last days, is this: "Departure from the faith." Everything that our fathers held to be true, the things for which the covenanters bled, the truths which the Puritans preached, are being denied to-day. We are indeed living in the last times. The faith of the Gospel is being

denied on every hand. When we speak of the faith what do we mean? We mean the truth of the Gospel. We must always distinguish between faith and *the faith*. Faith is the act of believing, *the faith* is what we believe. Faith is the act of the soul in its trust, *the faith* is the truth. There is a departure from that. How can we sum it up? It seems to me the following seven things do:—

1. We have a distinct revelation from God, in which God has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness.
2. There is, in that revelation, revealed to us man's utter incapacity to understand the things of God and to save himself, and hence man's utter ruin on account of sin.
3. That redemption comes only by the blood of Christ's atonement; there is only "one name given unto heaven whereby we can be saved."
4. The resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ from among the dead. We believe in a Christ who was once dead but is "alive for evermore."
5. We believe that faith takes in the reproduction of Christ in the life by the power of the indwelling Spirit, so that Christ is not only One who lived long ago, but He lives again in the life and heart of those who trust Him.
6. It means the return of a personal Christ. We are expecting Him to come back again as

He promised. "I will come and receive you unto Myself."

7. We believe that that faith lays upon every man, woman and child a responsibility, which means that they are under charge to God, to obey Him in His behests and in His directions, as revealed in the Word of His grace.

Every one of these things you will find is denied in Christendom to-day. Take the first, that we have a revelation from God. I was listening to a learned professor last month in St. Louis who said that "all religion has a natural origin. Jesus Christ is to be placed on the same platform with Confucius and Buddha and the rest of the great world teachers; that there is no such thing as a divine revelation; that God has not spoken; that all religion is the cultivation of ideals and reason." I would like to ask him one pertinent question. Here is a fact which he could not deny, because it is a fact in history. Did Confucius ever come up to his own ideal? He confessed himself that he did not. Did Jesus Christ ever make such confession? No. "I do always those things that please My Father." Jesus Christ was what He claimed to be, or He was the greatest imposter that ever walked this earth. I take sides with Jesus Christ, and I believe

that He came from God, and that He was the Divine Logos, the Word, not only a word, but that His holy birth, His life, His miracles, His sayings, His death, resurrection, ascension glory, spell out what He is.

We find that the Bible teaches the ruin of man, that "they that are in the flesh cannot please God." "Except a man be born again he cannot see or enter the kingdom of God." What do we find in the pulpit? That there is something latent in the natural man which only needs to be placed in a favorable environment to develop it, that it is a question of evolution, not involution; that it is development, not salvation. Men are preaching an ethical Gospel. They are whitewashing men while they are going down to damnation. Men don't want whitewashing; they want washing white. They don't want the exterior improved; they want the whole house renovated. It isn't the improvement of a man; it is the setting aside of a man, it is being made new. "If any man be in Christ Jesus he is a new creation."

We believe that the faith of the Gospel proclaims redemption by the blood of Christ. We have this statement "without shedding of blood, there is no remission." That is one of the statements of the Word of God. But what do

we find? We find men to-day who occupy Christian pulpits, which are governed by Trust Deeds that say only the Gospel of Jesus Christ shall be preached, sneering at the religion of the shambles and speaking blasphemously about the Blood, about the Atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ. Dr. Nichol, the editor of the *British Weekly*, well said, "No one can for one moment deprecate or deprecate the atonement of Jesus Christ who has ever seen his own heart and has felt the need of his own soul." If these men who talk this way would only get a sight of themselves they would cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner," instead of talking as they do.

"What can wash away my stain,
Nothing but the blood of Jesus."

We need that blood. Nothing else will suffice. Do we believe this?

The faith of the Gospel proclaims the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The resurrection is an historic fact; and the Gospel is based upon that fact. We believe that the resurrection of Christ is a miracle, yet there was a miracle in the miracle. The resurrection itself is miraculous; but when Peter and John looked in the tomb, they saw something very peculiar. They had already been told that Christ was risen.

They went to see whether that was so. Surely they would see the clothes thrown about disorderly in the natural course of things. They were not astonished that Christ was gone. The thing that astonished them was to see the clothes in all their convolutions, just as they had been wrapped around the body of Jesus; as if the body of Jesus was still there. It wasn't. What was the miracle? He passed through the clothes without disturbing them. Notice in the resurrection of Lazarus, you get the same thing. You find that the Lord Jesus Christ said, "Lazarus, come forth; and he that was dead came forth." How could he come forth when he was bound hand and foot? He could not walk. Many of the old writings picture him moving along. It was not only a miracle that he was raised from the dead, but that he could not move and yet he advanced. So you find a miracle in the miracle of the Lord Jesus Christ. What are we told? The resurrection of Jesus Christ is a myth. We are told He only swooned. The soldiers did not think so when they looked upon Christ on the cross. They found He was dead already, so they did not break His bones. The Roman authorities took care that He was dead. They sealed up the tomb. The Roman authorities knew He rose from the dead. "Look here,"

they said to the soldiers, "we will bribe you; take this and say the disciples came and stole Him away." If there was one fact which was evident it was the resurrection of Christ. So many join hands with the old gnostics who say that Christ only *seemed* to suffer, that He did not *actually* suffer, that He did not *actually* rise, and they are among those that come under the head of the followers and the supporters of the anti-Christ.

We believe that the one essential thing in the Church of God is the filling of the Holy Ghost, the strengthening by the Spirit of the inner man that Christ may dwell in the heart. That is the essential thing, that is the lost Gospel. What do we find in the pulpit? Environment, ethics, good blood, favorable surroundings, and if people only get into sympathy with their surroundings the surroundings will get into sympathy with them. What we want to remember is that Christianity means Christ in the heart as well as Christ on the cross. If there is Christ in the heart, there will be Christ in the home, Christ in the life, Christ in His love, Christ in His compassion, Christ in His activity, Christ in His generosity, Christ in His truth, Christ Himself.

Do we not find there is a departure from the faith? I could give you evidence to prove that

every one of these articles of the faith of the Gospel has been denied by men who profess to be preachers of the Gospel. And it isn't in one church alone. You will find it in the Episcopal Church, in the Methodist Church, in the Baptist Church and in all the churches. Thank God, there is a noble army of men keeping to the old lines, and we ought to pray for them and encourage them, to cheer their hearts, and uphold their hands.

Then all around us are seducing spirits of worldliness and wantonness. There are things done in the name of Jesus Christ which are terrible. It seems to me the devil himself would be ashamed of some of the things. Men who profess to have revelations from God are doing the very devil's work. Listen to what a well-known American evangelist wrote a few years back: "There was a time," in referring to what a lady said in a public meeting, "when I was burdened for the city, when I prayed for my family and anxiously labored for the spiritual good of my neighbors. That is now all behind me. I have not a care. The city belongs to God. My children are His. Every one is in Him. I do nothing now but simply rest." Can we rest? What did the Master say, "Look on the fields." What did the Lord say? "Go and preach the Gospel." Such a

statement as that woman makes is nothing but arrogant, blatant selfishness. We are saved to serve. We are blessed to be a blessing.

A professional man withdraws himself from the company of his wife and children to enjoy heavenly communion with a dear sister! Why not call it by its proper name? "Adultery." A lady who professes to be entirely surrendered to God is wanted by the police for stealing jewelry. We have all seen similar things. There are many things done to-day in the name of Jesus Christ of which I believe almost the devil himself would be ashamed. Look at that man living in the west of England who says he is the personification of the Holy Ghost, he is the Christ returned to earth. I would like to get into the secret of that abode of love. I wish I had my astral body for a bit. I think I should have some revelations to make. God knows all about it.

There is another thing. Do we not find to-day the Church of God instead of getting on her knees when there is need for funds, resorting to all kinds of tomfoolery. She gets a lot of worldly people, and the flesh, and the devil to entertain. It matters not what you have, be it an ice cream supper or a hot pie supper, or an oyster supper—it matters not as long as you get what you want. In all your getting,

get; but don't get on your knees. The early church when they needed a thing got on their knees and pleaded with God. God answered prayer. God answers prayer still. I could give personal testimony. Time after time when we were hard pressed and got into a corner, we got down on our knees and God has surprised us. Some people don't know anything about His surprises. You must get into the Lord's plan if you want His surprises.

The late Dr. James A. Brooks, of St. Louis, some sixteen years ago wrote me this letter: "It seems to me more and more evident that the truth is not to win the field in our day; it will have a tremendous fight to hold its own against the ever increasing odds with which it has to contend. If the battle were only with the world and the devil there would be nothing to fear; but, unhappily, the fight must be carried on principally against professed friends. Insurrection rages within the citadel, and a 'man's foes are those of his own household.' The Church itself is traitorous and the worst enemy we have to dread. Annihilation, restoration, evolution, a mixture of Herbert Spencer, Darwin and Jesus Christ—such is the stuff certain popular preachers are giving to their hearers, and editors of religious papers throw up their hats, and shout themselves

hoarse over the power and progress of the Church. Alas! nothing is more apparent to me than that the professing body, with its false doctrines, its intense wordliness, its scarcely concealed iniquities, is on the rapids just above the Falls of Niagara and the awful abyss is just below."

Two or three years after he said again, "The conflict between truth and error is waxing hotter on this side of the sea (in America) as it is in the mother country. Higher criticism, a denial of the inspiration of the Scriptures, future probationism, annihilationism, contempt of the Atonement, ridicule of our Lord's coming, semi-unitarianism, semi-universalism, even in so-called evangelical churches, are pushing forward with a bolder front every day; and those who are contending earnestly for the faith once for all delivered to the saints are few and disheartened. But why should we be discouraged or surprised? We are plainly told by our Lord and by the Holy Ghost in the inspired writings, that in the last days there shall be difficult times, and we ought to know that just what we see around us must be witnessed before the end shall come."

That man of God has gone into the Master's presence. He was a valiant champion for the truth. We need more men like him and Dr.

Gordon of Boston. We missed a great lot when they were called home, for their influence was felt in England as well as in America. They were men who depended upon the power of the Holy Ghost for success in the Lord's ministry.

Need I remind you that sin is increasing on every hand, that iniquity is abounding to-day. There are worse sins committed in this city and London, and other cities of Europe, than ever were committed in the days which brought the flood to destroy man from off the face of the earth. Sodom and Gomorrah would not compare with the cities of to-day. If it were not for the salt of His children God would deal with swift judgment. The devil is not going to have it all his own way. All these things plainly tell us beyond any question that the coming of the Lord draweth nigh. You can almost hear His footsteps at the threshold of the door.

The times of the Gentiles have nearly run out, and all God's purposes in connection with Israel are ripening fast; and all the different things which are associated with the last days are leading up in the person of the anti-Christ whom the world will receive with open arms. Since these things are so near, how much nearer must the coming of the Lord Jesus

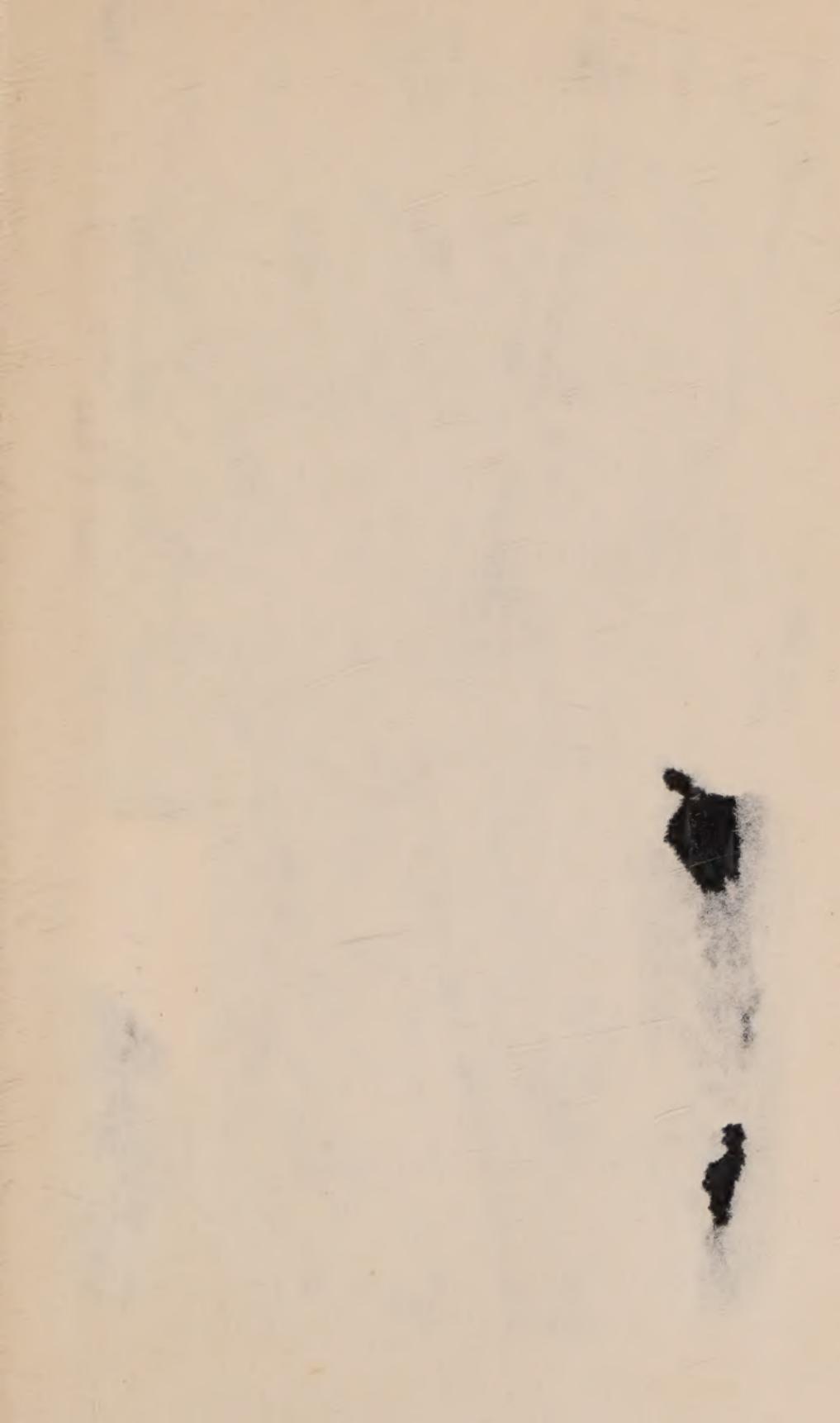
Christ be for His people. His coming for His people precedes His coming with them. He is coming in the clouds for His own. He will come in power when He comes, with that mighty army to put down sin and everything that has opposed His truth and Himself.

The question comes if the Lord is near, are we ready? If He were to come to-night should we see His face with joy or should we be ashamed before Him at His coming? There will be believers who will be ashamed before Him. God wants you to be right and ready. He wants your garments spotless. He wants to find you watching and looking out for Him. Dr. Gordon, on one occasion, when living out in the country, had to come into the city. He said to the children, "I don't know whether I shall get back on Wednesday, Thursday, Friday or Saturday, but I shall get back on one of those days." And every day, as train time drew near, those bairnies used to come to their mother, saying, "Father may come by this train. Please wash us and get us ready that we may go down to the depot and meet him." They went down on Wednesday, but he did not come. On Thursday again they prepared for the father's coming. He did not come. They went through the same thing on Friday, but he did not come. They prepared

again on Saturday and he did come. When Dr. Gordon got into his home with his children his wife told him how they had worried her every day to get them ready to meet him. Dear friends, will you allow the Holy Spirit to get you ready? Will you let Him cleanse out from your heart every unclean thing? Will you let Him cast out all pride and envy and hatred and malice? For these things are found in God's children. There are roots of bitterness. There is pride. There is self-sufficiency. Oh, let the Master make a clean sweep. "Let Him turn out all the bad lodgers," as one has said. He will do His work thoroughly. He will come and fill the house He has cleansed. Not only do you need that it should be a clean sweep, but that there should be an infilling, and that your house should be furnished, that the drawing room of your affection should be furnished, and the dining room, parlor and kitchen should be furnished, and when God furnishes it He does it beautifully. He comes with the grace of the Spirit which is love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness. People shall admire you and say, "what a splendidly furnished house you have," and you say, "it is the Lord's." When He comes, He will be so glad to see you and you will be glad to see Him.

“He and I in that bright glory,
One deep joy shall share;
His that I am ever with Him,
Mine that I am there.”

He longs to be with us. Do you long to be with Him? It will be heaven to be with Him. It will be joy for Him to be with us. The Lord is longing to be with His own. He wants to see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied, and He will not be satisfied till you are satisfied, and you will be satisfied only when you wake in His likeness. Oh! come, Lord Jesus, come quickly. May He find us ready with our lamps trimmed and burning, our service loyal and our whole being true, and He shall say to us, “Well done, well done, well done.”





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